

Re-election threat for overspenders

Heseltine in challenge over poll tax reform

By Robin Oakley, Political Editor

MR MICHAEL Heseltine today throws down a central challenge to the Cabinet on the future of the poll tax. In an article in *The Times*, he rejects a whole series of options being looked at by the committee of Cabinet ministers considering alterations to the community charge.

Instead, he proposes that all members of councils whose charge reflected a spending level more than a given percentage above the Government's assessment of their needs should have to face a local election. Mr Heseltine says: "I narrowly failed to persuade the Cabinet to adopt this proposal in 1981 (when he was Secretary of State for the Environment). I still believe it would work."

Arguing that the fear of electoral defeat is the only factor that keeps down spending — historically, councils have held down rates in election years — Mr Heseltine says the disciplines could be tightened further by insisting that a local authority proposing a high community charge would have to pay the Treasury a surcharge to compensate for the inflationary consequences.

Mr Heseltine, who says the Government will not be given another chance after this one to get the poll tax right, repeats his call for paid, directly-elected mayors with tougher value-for-money audits. He

urges the recreation of unitary authorities, pointing out that the much-vaunted Tory success in the low-poll tax boroughs of Wandsworth and Westminster — which ministers have taken as evidence that the principle of the poll tax is saleable — would have been unlikely if voters there had been confused by precepts from the old Greater London Council or Inner London Education Authority.

Ministers are discussing in private the idea of a return to single-tier boroughs after the next election: the question is whether they will retain their enthusiasm for the idea, or take up any other of Mr Heseltine's proposed reforms now Mrs Margaret Thatcher's main challenger has adopted them. The onus will be on the Cabinet to come up with something better or accept his ideas with a good grace.

In a series of other proposals that will open up the poll tax debate and could well influence any future leadership struggle, Mr Heseltine calls for redemption of Mrs Thatcher's original pledge to replace the rates with a system more broadly-based and reflecting people's ability to pay by banding the tax upwards, with top-rate taxpayers contributing more than those on lower incomes.

He criticizes the system of rebates and makes a clear demand for the exemption of the elderly living at home from paying the charge, declaring: "Taxing the elderly because they remain at home, looked after by their families, when transfer to old people's homes — thereby increasing public expenditure — would save them personally around £350 a year, seems to me a negation of Tory principles." He also describes the double burden of poll tax and business rate for small businesses living above the shop as unacceptable.

Rejecting present practice in assessing rebates, he says: "The deemed assumption by the Government that savings can earn over 20 per cent is frankly incredible." And in another indication of the exemptions he seeks, Mr Heseltine says: "We have gained the maximum political opprobrium by charging the physically disabled, student nurses and students themselves, with precious little extra revenue to show for it."

Accepting that the Conservatives will fight the next election with the poll tax in place and warning that it costs £1 billion in Treasury funds to reduce the average charge by £28, he rejects a number of the

options being considered by a Government seeking to placate Conservative MPs alarmed about the political fall-out of the charge.

There is no guarantee, he says, that hefty increases in the central government grant to local authorities will see more than a fraction passed on in lower community charges. "There would be a bonanza of public expenditure with only a gesture of charge reduction," and income tax might have to rise while the Government would be blamed for falling standards of service.

He dismisses the idea of universal capping as an idea "crawled all over" by ministers before being rejected. It would encourage lower spenders to spend up to the limit and destroy the central aim of the legislation: accountability.

Mr Heseltine's language in condemnation of the poll tax and its effects is bitterly uncompromising. He says it has created a lingering sense of injustice among those who saved to buy their own homes and budgeted carefully for their old age. In spite of their lifelong commitment to the Tory cause they felt "badly let down".

In a passage which almost amounts to a rallying call for a Conservative leadership contest he insists he has no intention of creating. Mr Heseltine goes on: "To these must be added recent recruits: council house buyers and the couple in a terraced house who last year paid £230 in rates and this year face a bill of over £700. They don't have any doubt whose fault that is. They are not political philosophers, just couples with a tight budget. They have to be won back to their natural political home. There is no time to be lost. There will be no second chance."

Mr Heseltine's promised contribution to the poll tax debate has been eagerly awaited by Conservative MPs who accept that despite the better-than-expected showing in the local elections, the party's problems are far from over. Mr Heseltine, by coming out ahead of the Government's own review of the poll tax, acknowledges that he has taken a risk in putting himself up to be shot at.

His article also includes a warning that wage claims are "damagingly close to double-figure disaster" and that local authorities in their spending plans are unlikely to confine themselves to the amount required to cover inflation.

Scots conference, page 5
Let people choose, page 14

Aids spreads among adults in Romania

From Christopher Walker, Bucharest

ROMANIA is suffering a serious spread of Aids among adults in addition to the paediatric epidemic uncovered after the overthrow of President Ceausescu.

The discovery comes after years in which Romania lied to world bodies about a non-incidence of Aids, depicted in the media as a disease afflicting capitalist societies. The nature of the cover-up is now being scientifically exposed.

In an interview with *The Times*, Dr Jacques Lebas, the

leading French Aids expert who helped to confirm the original epidemic among Romanian children, disclosed that the first tests on a random sample of 7,000 adults in Romanian hospitals showed that 40, or 0.6 per cent, were HIV-positive.

Dr Lebas said: "This is very serious news for the country, and will require an urgent strategy to be drawn up by the authorities to counter it."

Adult epidemic, page 11

Bournemouth to sue League over soccer riot

By David Sapsted

BOURNEMOUTH councillors yesterday initiated legal action against both the Football League and Leeds United in a bid to obtain tens of thousands of pounds in compensation after the weekend riot by visiting soccer hooligans.

While Mr Colin Moynihan, the Minister for Sport, appeared to be waging an uphill campaign to get Sardinian authorities to ban alcohol when they play host to England in the World Cup this summer, the councillors on the Dorset coast voted unanimously to engage counsel to prepare a case for suing the league and the club. Saturday's troubles at Bournemouth were also uppermost in the mind of Mr Lennart Johansson, president of Union of European Football Associations (UEFA).

He said he would be seeking guar-

antees from the British Government that it would "take all possible legal steps on security abroad and at home on high-risk matches" before the crucial meeting of the union to decide whether English soccer clubs should be allowed to resume European competition.

He said that even if England had a trouble-free World Cup, it would not guarantee the clubs' re-admission to Europe. He wanted guarantees from the Government, he said, in the wake of the trouble at Bournemouth, where he had been "dismayed" to see the lack of co-operation between the police, who wanted the fixture date changed, and the football authorities, who refused.

In Bournemouth itself, Mr Stephen Chappel, the council's solicitor, said that any action would serve as a test case. "In view of the admissions of the Football League, the council should quantify its losses and issue a claim against the

league. If the claim is not met, they should issue a summons," he said. The council would only be able to sue for its own losses, he said, not those suffered by traders, householders or individuals whose cars were damaged during the rioting.

Superintendent Leslie Burns, who was in charge of policing Saturday's game, told the committee that he had not anticipated the level of violence. "We are extremely lucky we did not lose a life," he said.

Meanwhile, in Sardinia, Mr Moynihan's success at getting the Italian government's blessing for the idea of an alcohol ban ran into local opposition. There are grave doubts that the local prefect would upset local bar-owners and hoteliers by ordering them to shut when the English fans were in town.

Full report, page 48



Mr Michael Heseltine yesterday: he says the Government has one more chance on poll tax

Labour MPs disown report on teachers

By David Tytler, Education Editor

THE bitter divisions surrounding the delayed publication of an all-party report on teacher supply over the next 10 years emerged yesterday when the four Labour members dissociated themselves from the final report. It called on the Government to provide a "substantial" amount of money to improve teachers' pay and conditions and to lift low classroom morale.

The four Labour MPs on the 11-strong committee said yesterday they voted against the report because it failed fully to reflect the evidence the committee received "about the dire state of the profession, and as a mark of our concern about the constant unacceptable pressure applied to the committee by government ministers and Tory whips".

Mr Malcolm Thornton, Conservative MP for Sheffield, Hillsborough, said there were "profound" differences over the report; mainly over the committee's approval of the licensed and articulated teachers' scheme to give on-the-job training to mature students and to introduce differential salaries in the shortage subjects of mathematics, physics and technology.

Mr Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said many of the report's recommendations were designed "to con parents that something will be done".

Teachers' morale, page 5
Leading article, page 15

Peaceful day of Soviet parades

By Anatol Lieven and Mary Dejevsky

A FEW scuffles between armed troops and nationalist demonstrators in Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, were the only manifestation of the violence which the leaders of the Baltic republics had feared would be spurred by yesterday's Victory Day parades in the Soviet Union.

In Moscow, Marshal Dmitri Yavov, the Soviet Defence Minister, presided over one of the most perfunctory and least anti-Western Victory Day parades since the ceremony was instituted. But he gave a warning that a risk of war still existed and called for the Soviet Union to keep its defences at an "adequate and sufficient level".

In the Baltic republics, the Soviet armed forces commemorated the 45th anniversary of their victory over Nazi Germany with an impressive display of military might. There had been warnings of violence beforehand by Soviet officers, and in Vilnius, the Lithuanian leadership had asked its supporters to remain at home to avoid any possibility of "provocation".

Crowds estimated at less than 3,000 lined the city's main Gedyminas Avenue to see the parade, including light armed vehicles, pass the parliament building where independence was declared and where President Landsbergis has his office.

The scuffles appear to have been short-lived. Some ethnic Russian women in the crowd presented flowers to para-

Continued on page 24, col 1

Unity show, page 10

Car pricing inquiry launched

By Kevin Eason, Motoring Correspondent

AN INVESTIGATION of British car prices, claimed to be as much as a third higher than the rest of Europe, is to be mounted by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The commission has been asked by the Office of Fair Trading to establish whether British car buyers are often asked to pay substantially more than customers in the other 11 nations of the European Community.

It will also delve into the cost of parts and servicing, as part of the probe asked for by Sir Gordon Borrie, the director-general of Fair Trading. He referred the matter to the monopolies commission after deciding that complaints by consumer organizations were sufficient to warrant a full

investigation. The inquiry comes on top of demands from Sir Leon Brittan, the European competition commissioner to know why prices vary so widely. Sir Leon has written to 15 manufacturers asking for an explanation of their prices.

The motor industry yesterday refused to mount a thorough defence of accusations that it was "milking" the British market, but produced exhaustive accounts of pricing policies throughout the EC. Ford would not give prices for the rest of Europe but said it was confident its policies would stand up to examination. Rover also refused to disclose specific prices, but said there were substantial differences in specifications of

cars on sale in different countries. "They cannot be compared because the cars on sale in each nation vary widely according to circumstances," it said.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders said it believed price differentials first highlighted by the European Consumers' Union in January were "greatly exaggerated", and pointed to the greater specification of UK cars over European rivals. The organization, which represents both manufacturers and dealers, said it did not believe the system operated against the public interest.

Sir Gordon, however, said there was enough concern to warrant an examination of pricing policies and distribu-

Prices compared, page 2
Stock market, page 32

Young under fire again over Rover

By Sheila Ginn, Political Reporter

LORD Young of Grafton faced fresh allegations yesterday that he misled Parliament and the European Commission during the controversial £150 million sale of the Rover car company to British Aerospace.

However, the Commons trade and industry split down party lines over the strength of its criticism of the former Trade and Industry Secretary's actions. After last night's private session to debate the draft report of the chairman, Mr Kenneth Warren, one committee MP reported: "We only got to paragraph 15 — and there was blood all over the place."

Although Mr Warren's report urges stringent criticism of Lord Young's handling of the sale, some of the other

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Property firm lays off 800

Rush & Tompkins, the property developer has laid off 800 of its 1,750 employees. The move came as the receivers estimated the group's total debt at more than £300 million. Several main board directors will lose their jobs.

Mr Christopher Morris, one of the receivers, said he had not yet completed a review of Rush & Tompkins's business but that it was very unlikely shareholders would receive any money back. Page 25

Church divided

The Methodist commission which has compiled a report on the ordination of homosexuals, was deeply divided and has recommended that the decision should be made individually. Page 3

Lithuania plea

Lithuania's supplies of oil will run out within the next three weeks. Mrs Kazimiera Prunskiene, the country's Prime Minister, said in London yesterday when she visited Mrs Thatcher to ask for British support. Page 10

Elderly care

By the year 2000 there will be 10 million Britons over retirement age. A Special Report examines the issues facing the ageing. Pages 35-37

Exciting vision

Nanotechnology is a field of science that conjures up exciting visions: microbots injected into the bloodstream to perform surgery or used to attack air pollution. Hype versus reality — in Science and Technology. Page 39

Students win

Yorkshire's cricketers were beaten by the Combined Universities by two wickets in a group match of the Benson and Hedges Cup. Page 48

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Mr Moynihan: Has won support for alcohol ban

Sunroofs and radios of the fleet boom drive up all car prices

By Kevin Eason, Motoring Correspondent

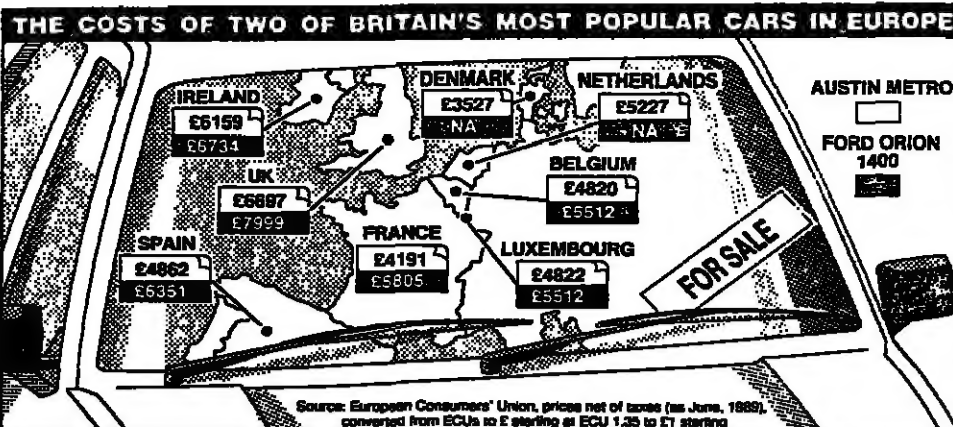
EVERY other car that leaves a British showroom is on its way to a company car driver. The trade is worth more than £10 billion a year, and is particularly valuable for British manufacturers who supply the fleet industry.

The effort of supplying that vast market, however, has brought an unwelcome spin-off for private car buyers, who have to pay for the "extras" company car drivers demand. The British market has been the most open in Europe for 20 years; it is neither motivated by patriotism, nor governed by high taxation.

The story throughout the rest of Europe has been vastly different, as the Monopolies and Mergers Commission will discover when it opens its 15-month investigation into

manufacturers' pricing policies. The inquiry will not only have to examine prices at the factory gate for each car but taxation levels in each country and what goes into each car. Britain is by far the most complex and competitive market in the European Community, with six out of 10 new cars coming from foreign manufacturers. It was Britain that first allowed the Japanese to exploit customers, disgruntled with low-quality home-built cars, and to discover that buyers were just as likely to be enticed by a radio or electrically powered windows as they were by price.

At the same time, a Labour Government wage freeze encouraged employers to offer company cars in lieu of pay rises. The result was an explosion of company car use, with



one in 10 of all cars now belonging to companies and half of all new car sales — more than a million a year — going into fleets.

With company profits buoyant throughout the late 1980s, firms spent freely on

new cars, bowing to the wishes of employees who wanted more luxuries in their cars.

The result is that British cars are, according to the manufacturers, much more highly specified than those available abroad.

Local taxes also often mean that buyers abroad eventually pay the same or even more than their British counterparts, the industry says. Dr Peter Cope, at the motor industry research unit of East Anglia University, Norwich,

said a check showed that VAT in Denmark was 22 per cent, and there were registration taxes up to 180 per cent over the pre-tax price.

In France, the Government has been steadily reducing VAT from more than 30 per cent to 25 per cent, while VAT in West Germany was 14 per cent. In Belgium, judged to be as much as a third cheaper than Britain, VAT was 25 per cent, and there were special taxes of up to 8 per cent on cars over three litres. However, the Government also imposes price restrictions, which means that price increases there of 1 per cent on average on some models this year compare with rises to combat inflation of 3 per cent in the UK.

Britain charges a 10 per cent Special Car Tax in addition to VAT of just short of 15 per

cent. Dr Cope said: "Pre-tax prices are often varied to allow for local taxation, which, as in the case of Denmark, is almost double the original price. That could distort the comparisons made by the European Consumers' Union."

Volkswagen-Audi ran a full comparison and claimed that its prices varied little in its three key markets, Britain, Belgium and West Germany. Mr Stewart Miller, the company's general manager for tax-free sales based in Baker Street, London, said: "Just the movement of exchange rates can make an enormous variation in prices. The key difference of specifications is also vital. British buyers, for example, expect a radio as standard in this country, where in Germany they do not."

A VW Passat CL Estate (90 brake horse power) with catalytic converter, on sale in Belgium or West Germany would not have a driver's seat height adjuster, central locking, radio-cassette, stereo speaker fittings or wiring, full-size spare wheel or heated washer jets, plus a wide-angle door mirror as in Britain. The car here with those extra fittings is £9,237, in Belgium £8,929 and in Germany £9,550.

Despite that evidence, the suspicions are still strong that the motor industry has a case to answer. Why, for example, can buyers not have basic specification cars as abroad and then make their choices on extra items? Record sales suggest British buyers are willing to pay for the car of their choice at whatever price.

Government moves to plug gaps in union laws

By Tim Jones, Employment Correspondent

THE Government yesterday moved to "plug" loopholes in the employment Bill now before Parliament just six days after Mr Michael Howard, Secretary of State for Employment, had described the attempt to rig the transport union workers' ballot as "disgraceful".

The announcement was immediately condemned by Mr Tony Blair, Labour's employment spokesman, as "a crude campaign against the unions". The first amendment to be introduced to the Bill, which is primarily aimed at outlawing wildcat strikes, will give union members a chance to challenge their leaders' choice of an independent scrutineer for union elections.

The amendment will require unions to announce the name of the scrutineer in advance of the election and include his name on each voting paper. Government sources said yesterday the attempt to tamper with the elections for the national executive committee of the Transport and General Workers' Union was spotted by the Electoral Reform Society, and not the scrutineer nominated by the union.

The Serious Crime Squad, who were called in by Mr Ron Todd, the union's general secretary, is still investigating the allegations that more than 9,000 votes were illegally cast in favour of left-wing candidates. The second amendment to the Bill is planned to stop shop stewards from organizing unofficial action following

a strike ballot. It will require unions to specify on the voting paper who will call the strike if there is a majority in favour of taking action.

If a strike is called by someone whose name is not on the voting paper, it will be unlawful. If the Bill becomes law, shop stewards would be prevented from calling for strike action before the outcome of the ballot had been considered by the leadership of a union.

Mr Howard said yesterday: "These changes in the law are a natural extension of our legislation, which has given union members the right to elect their leaders by postal ballot and to decide for themselves whether or not to go on strike by voting in a secret ballot."

Last week, Mr Howard said: "The disgraceful attempt to rig the TGWU election might never have come to light in the first place but for the Government's legislation requiring such elections to be conducted by postal ballot under independent scrutiny."

Mr Blair, however, said: "This is a pathetic attempt by Mr Howard to play politics with trade unions, refighting the battles of the 1980s because he has lost those of the 1990s — training, skills and the rights of people at work."

Mr John Monks, the TUC deputy general secretary said: "It is one thing to support properly held ballots. It is quite another to overload the balloting process with a vast array of detailed and cumbersome legal rules."

Captain attends M1 crash inquest

By Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent

CAPTAIN Kevin Hunt sat in his wheelchair in the library of a Leicestershire country house yesterday, and stared expressionless at the floor as the names of the 47 passengers who died in the Boeing 737-400 he was piloting on the night of Sunday, January 8, 1989, were read out by the coroner at the opening of the inquest into the victims of the M1 air crash.

Neither he nor his first officer, David McClelland, need have been at the hearing but both decided to attend for personal reasons. Shortly before 10am Captain Hunt was driven into the courtyard of Prestwold Hall near Loughborough by his wife, Joan, and was then pushed by Mr McClelland through the ranks of news cameramen anxious to obtain the first picture of the crew who had apparently mistakenly shut down the right-hand engine of the jet when it was the left-hand engine that was damaged.

As relatives of the victims were ushered into the drawing room of the 19th-century house, Captain Hunt and Mr McClelland sat quietly in the library only able to catch a glimpse of the coroner through connecting doors.

For nearly three hours they listened as medical evidence of the injuries each of the victims received when the jet ploughed in to an embankment short of the runway of East Midlands airport.

Over the next few weeks 41 witnesses will be heard including seven from the Department of Transport's air accident investigation branch and — finally — from Captain Hunt and Mr McClelland themselves.



Captain Hunt arrives for the opening of the inquest into the Kegworth air crash

MoD prepares to do battle on spending

By Philip Webster and Michael Evans

THE Prime Minister is to resist Treasury attempts to put a firm price on the so-called "peace dividend" arising from the changing atmosphere in Eastern Europe.

With Whitehall departments mobilizing for what is already being hailed as the toughest public spending round since 1979, reports yesterday suggesting that Mr John Major, the Chancellor, was looking for a £1 billion slice out of next year's defence budget were widely seen as the first shot in a battle that will continue to the autumn.

They were immediately seen as the Treasury's opening bid for its negotiations with the Ministry of Defence to cut back on its estimated spending for next year of £21.2 billion. But it was quickly made plain in Whitehall that while long-term savings are expected from the easing of tensions, Mr Tom King, the Secretary of State for Defence, will be supported by Mrs Thatcher in opposing any suggestion of a cut of such magnitude so quickly.

Mr Major has the Ministry of Defence in his sights because of the potential for cuts arising from the reduced military threat.

Yesterday Treasury officials said that although the negotiations with the spending departments were at an early stage, ministers were already beginning to put in their bids for next year. "These early stages are very important, especially because of the warning from the Chancellor that budgets are going to be tight," one official said.

However any attempt to reduce the defence budget by a substantial amount would be viewed as unreasonable and impractical, according to Min-

istry of Defence sources. The ministry's budget for next year is complicated by the fact that the ministry is now engaged in a review of the options for changing the structure of the three armed forces in the light of the developments in Eastern Europe and the crumbling of the Warsaw Pact as a military alliance.

Although Mr King accepts that there may eventually be a "peace dividend", he also wants a "service dividend", by which he means a switching of funds for improving conditions for servicemen and women.

He stated in recent evidence to the Commons Defence Committee that so far his team examining the options for change had failed to find ways of saving money in the short term. Relocation of servicemen and improved equipment in key areas would reduce the opportunities for making cuts.

Ashdown urges rail inquiry

MR PADDY Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, has called for an investigation into a "rebellion" by rail passengers at Yeovil on Bank Holiday Monday.

Mr Ashdown, MP for Yeovil, said trouble erupted when day trippers arrived at Pen Mill station in Yeovil, Somerset, to find the holiday special to Weymouth had only two carriages. Passengers tried to cram themselves on the train, causing chaotic scenes.

Marsh for trial

Magistrates at Barking, Essex, yesterday committed the boxer Terry Marsh, aged 32, to stand trial at the Central Criminal Court for attempting to murder his former manager, Frank Warren, last November. Marsh was remanded in custody after an application for bail was refused.

Childline grant

Mrs Virginia Bottomley, the Minister for Health, announced that the Government is giving £300,000 over the next three years to Childline to help tackle the "scourge of child abuse". The minister met Esther Rantzen, the helpline's chairman, at its London headquarters.

Arts audit

The Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre and the Royal Opera are to be among 31 companies examined by the Arts Council this year in a three-year programme of investigating organizations funded through the council. The schedule will be announced this week.

Farmers 'ignoring' egg check rules

By Michael Hornsby, Agriculture Correspondent

MANY poultry farmers are failing to carry out legally required salmonella tests on their flocks, and the Government is not providing the resources and information needed for proper enforcement of the regulations, trading standards officers said yesterday.

Under regulations introduced last year after the furore over salmonella in eggs, all poultry flocks laying eggs for human consumption must be tested for salmonella every 12 weeks. Any flock found to

contain infected birds has to be slaughtered. About 1.2 million birds have so far been destroyed.

Mr Keith Pulman, the secretary of the United Kingdom Egg Producers Association, said: "We have urged all our members to obey the testing rules, but the word has not yet got down to all the smaller producers."

In one area, North Yorkshire, trading standards officers reported yesterday that 212 of 231 poultry farms visited during the first three months of this year were found not to be testing their flocks. Mr Graham Vean, assistant county

trading standards officer, said: "Of these 231 farms, 82 had flocks of 100 birds or more, and of these only 11 had done tests and only four had notified the results to the Ministry of Agriculture."

It is not yet clear whether North Yorkshire is typical of Britain as a whole, but provisional reports from other counties indicate a high level of non-compliance.

Mr David Maclean, the parliamentary secretary at the ministry responsible for food safety, said farmers who sought to dodge the testing rules would give "eggs a bad name once again".

Police issue pictures as bogus social workers strike again

By Peter Davenport

DETECTIVES hunting bogus social workers who try to examine young children yesterday issued photofit pictures of the couple in the latest incident in South Yorkshire.

They were released as police in Manchester and Dorset reported two more attempts by couples to examine children, both of which failed.

There have been nine such incidents in South Yorkshire. A special investigation team in Rotherham is looking into those and other cases reported in West Yorkshire, Humberside, Cheshire, Wiltshire and Somerset.

The man involved in the incident at Park Hill, South

Yorkshire, on Friday is described as white, aged 36 to 37, 5 ft 6 in to 5 ft 7 in tall, medium build with short mousey-coloured hair and moustache. The woman is white, 26 to 27, 5 ft 2 in to 5 ft 3 in tall, slim with fair, collar-length hair cut in a bob style.



Wanted couple: photofits of the man and woman who tried to examine a child last Friday

Choctaw reaffirm Irish link

By Edward Gorman, Irish Affairs Correspondent

THE American Indians are coming to Ireland this month to reaffirm a little known but fascinating historical link with Ireland's poor that goes back to the terrible times of the great famine 143 years ago.

On May 26, Chief Hollis E Roberts and other members of the Choctaw will lead an annual sponsored walk in Co Mayo commemorating an anguished trek by 600 starving Irish men, women and children in search of food at the height of the famine in 1847.

The walk, from Doolough to Louisburgh, is organized by the charity Action From Ireland, which hopes to raise £7,000 to support projects in Third World countries and will this year be called "The Trail of Tears". Mr Don Mullan, director of the charity,

said yesterday that the presence of Chief Roberts was a chance for Ireland to express "our gratitude to the descendants of a caring and compassionate people".

The link goes back to a gesture in 1847 by the Choctaw, who, having suffered catastrophic hardships of their own at the hands of settlers, decided to make a contribution to alleviate suffering in Ireland. In 1831, after the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, the government of President Jackson forcibly moved the Choctaw to Oklahoma. By the end of the 500-mile trek around 14,000 Choctaw were dead. The Indians have remembered it as The Trail of Tears.

While coping with the trauma the Indians heard of Ire-

land's famine and their chief ordered a gathering at which the large sum of \$710 was collected and sent to Ireland.

"This walk symbolizes the continued suffering of millions of human beings upon our planet today, who die of hunger and hunger-related diseases, caused by the same injustice and human rights violations, which crushed so many Irish and American Indians in the last century," Mr Mullan said.

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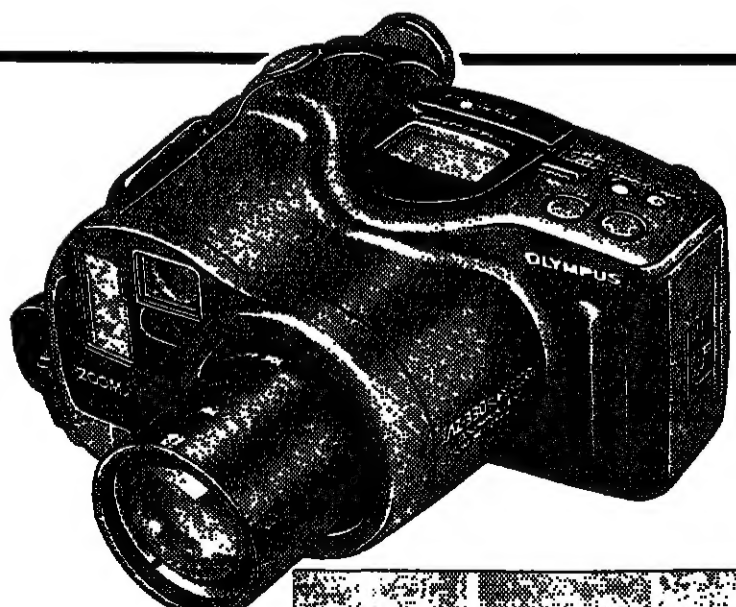
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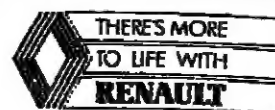
0-62 in just 9.5 seconds. As fast as a 2.5 litre 6 cylinder fuel injected BMW. And what if you didn't want a manual gearbox, would you automatically expect to lose performance?

Not so. The TXI automatic has a new 4-speed gearbox. Its electronically controlled hydraulic transmission ensures the optimum fuel efficiency and improves power response when you put your foot down.

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But if you think this is just a fast car stop right there. Bosch AES anti-lock brakes are fitted as standard (stopping you faster and safer). While Anti-plunge prevents the car from diving under hard braking (reducing stress on the car and the driver). And the cost of all this technology? Only \$16,995*. After all nobody ever made a fortune by spending one.



*The new range is priced from \$13,335 for the GTS to \$23,990 for the Barchon V6 2.9 Automatic. All models come with an airbag. See your local Renault dealer or ring 0800 525150 for a brochure. The 12 month unlimited mileage warranty excludes five RAC membership. All Renault cars have a 6 year anti-rust warranty. DELIVERY AND NUMBER PLATES EXTRA. Prices correct at time of going to press, include VAT and Car Tax. RENAULT recommends Castrol motor oils.

مركز أمن الأمان

Rifkind to assuage angst over poll tax at Scots conference

By Nicholas Wood
Political Correspondent

MR MALCOLM Rifkind will today cite Scotland's experience of the poll tax as a way of steadying the nerves of English Tory backbenchers still pressing for substantial changes in the new charge.

On the first day of the Scottish Conservative Party Conference in Aberdeen, the Secretary of State for Scotland will argue that the community charge has not led to any serious slippage in the Tory vote north of the border. He will advise his English colleagues that if they can follow the Scottish example of avoiding major splits and defections over the issue, they can look forward to recapturing the backing of their traditional supporters.

Reminding them of the battering the Conservatives took in Scotland over the

introduction of the charge a year earlier than in England and Wales, he will suggest that now is the time to show some "backbone" in facing their critics. None the less, as anxious Tory MPs south of the border pour over the results of the council elections, there will be many who would be horrified at the thought that they have anything to learn from Scotland, where the Conservative Party, beaten into third place behind the Scottish Nationalists in the council poll, have become an endangered species.

Nor have the Scottish Tories yet succeeded in presenting a totally united front as they gather in Aberdeen. Mr Arthur Bell, chairman of the leftish Scottish Tory Reform Group, has sought to puncture the euphoria generated by the latest council elections and spoken against the shift to the right under the

chairmanship of Mr Michael Forsyth. Mr Bill Walker, the Tory MP for North Tayside, rebuked him angrily, saying his comments on television 48 hours before the poll were "most damaging" to the Conservatives' electoral prospects.

More than 1,000 representatives of local Scottish Conservative associations are expected to attend the three-day meeting, which will end with the Prime Minister's first speech since last week's council elections and which will include contributions from a host of Cabinet ministers. Rank-and-file morale, dented by the Tories' disastrous general election performance in which they lost 11 of their 21 MPs and by dismal opinion poll ratings, has been given a fillip by the council elections, which resulted in only a handful of net losses.

The Tories polled 19.5 per cent of the

vote in last week's regional elections, slightly up on their 1986 figure of 16.9 per cent and quite appreciably higher than the 15 per cent they were given in an opinion poll last month. Add to that another 2 or 3 per cent to compensate for the Tory votes siphoned off by the strong independent presence in the local elections, and the Conservatives are within hailing distance of the 24 per cent they scored in the debacle of 1987.

Labour's 44 per cent in the council elections was in line with their performance four years ago, but well down on their recent poll rating of 53 per cent. It is against that background that Mr Rifkind will argue that the community charge need not be a vote loser for the Conservatives at the next general election. He believes that the council elections provide evidence that the

debate about local government finance in Scotland has matured into a hard-headed comparison between the rival merits of the community charge on the one hand and the alternatives offered by Labour and the Liberal Democrats.

He will also maintain that this is an argument the Tories can win, at least with their natural supporters, by pointing to their success in flushing out the Opposition to the extent that they were forced to put a figure on their roof tax. Mr Donald Dewar, the shadow Scottish Secretary, went a lot further than his southern counterparts by saying that the average two-earner family would have to pay £487 under Labour's proposals, rather less than the average £612 bill faced by couples paying the poll tax.

Mr Rifkind, who is likely to counsel against sweeping changes as a result of

the Government's review of the operation of the community charge, believes that the Scottish experience is likely to be repeated in England and Wales, with greater scrutiny being applied to the rival alternatives and a firming of the vote among natural Tory supporters. In support of this contention, Mr Rifkind is pointing to the greatly improved support in his Edinburgh Pentlands constituency and Mr Forsyth's Stirling seat.

Unlike the last two Scottish Tory conferences, this one is unlikely to be riven by internal divisions of real substance. This year's conference also marks a break with tradition in that the venue has been switched from the Conservative stronghold of Perth to Aberdeen, an area in which the party used to be strong but lost four seats at the last election.

MPs seek urgent action to raise teachers' morale

By David Tyler, Education Editor

SEVERAL million pounds will have to be found by the Government to improve teachers' morale, provide adequate salaries and bring schools up to a decent standard of repair, according to an all-party committee of MPs.

The report of the Commons Education, Science and Arts Committee, published yesterday, also calls for a general teaching council to supervise and advise the profession — a proposal rejected by the Government because of a lack of agreement among the six teacher unions.

The report says the imposed 8.3 per cent pay deal should be paid at once and not staged, as demanded by the Treasury, and says teacher morale could also be improved if schools were properly maintained and there was better discipline in the classroom.

mends that the London allowances should be increased and extended to the whole of the South-east, and be funded by central government. It also suggests that local authorities might consider paying off the student loans of newly trained teachers.

The Government maintains there are only real difficulties in mathematics, science, and technology. The select committee, however, says: "Vacancy rates are relatively high in computer studies, drama and music. Many schools have difficulty providing properly qualified teaching in mathematics, physics, design and technology and modern languages particularly, but also in religious education, early years education and business studies."

for the teacher who wishes to remain in the classroom rather than take on an administrative or managerial function. Extra resources should be provided so that incentive allowances and mid-career salaries can be increased in value and can take up a greater proportion of the salary bill without jeopardizing increases in the main scale.

Morale

The committee says that it is important to improve the morale of teachers who believe they are being misjudged and undervalued. The report says high morale distinguishes a good school from a poor one. "It comes from a feeling among the teaching staff that their contribution is appreciated by their head, by parents, local education authorities, government and society in general: it comes from teachers having some opportunity to involve themselves in the conditions of their profession."

"It comes from parents and parent-teacher associations showing a real interest in what is going on in the classroom and in being supportive of the teaching staff, particularly over matters of discipline."

"It comes from clean and pleasant school buildings, it comes from a working day that leaves some time for thinking about pupils and their needs, and from the satisfaction of teaching children who want to learn and seeing the results."

The committee concludes that morale could be improved by better pay and conditions and a genuine effort to treat teachers as professionals. It suggests that could be helped by the setting up of a general teaching council to oversee the profession.

Future supply

Another 50,000 to 100,000 more teachers will be required to deliver the National Curriculum, above the Department of Education's 416,000 estimate, the committee says. Every 10,000 extra teachers needed for the curriculum will add £170 million to the salary bill.

The recommendations

The select committee on education recommends:

The setting up of a general teaching council to oversee the profession;

Practical training in managing the classroom and dealing with poor discipline;

Extra money should be made available urgently to bring all schools up to a standard of good repair, to maintain good levels of equipment and to provide ancillary help;

Local education authorities should recruit more supply teachers attached to specific schools and ensure that they are properly trained;

Appropriately-qualified people with proven ability as mathematics, science and computing teachers should be paid on a high scale;

The DES should investigate how student teachers paid bursaries in shortage subjects can return the money if they

fail to enter the classroom on qualifying;

A new grant for education authorities should be introduced, based on an index of costs and social difficulties to enable those with difficulties to supplement teachers' pay, for example housing costs;

The Government should establish and publish an evaluation of costs in inner and outer London and in the South-east as a whole;

An allowance should be payable in all parts of the South-east where housing costs are similar to those in Greater London;

The DES should provide more information about the teaching force more quickly;

Schemes allowing schools to run their own financial affairs should reflect the real costs of teachers and allow them to recruit and keep a well-balanced teaching staff.

Three crew injured in ship blast

THREE badly burned seamen were rescued after an explosion on a bulk oil carrier 60 miles south-west of Land's End yesterday. A Royal Navy helicopter and an RAF Nimrod took part in the operation to fly the injured crewmen to hospital in Plymouth.

The men were in the hold of the Taiwanese-owned *Trave Ore*, when an explosion, the cause of which is not yet known, blew off a hatch.

Theft inquiry

Six people who work in the accounts department of Hull bus company, which is owned by the city council, have been arrested by police investigating alleged theft. Four have been released on bail and two are still being questioned.

Water charge

Mid-Sussex Water was sent for trial at Lewes Crown Court yesterday accused of polluting the water supply of the village of West Firle, East Sussex. The privately owned company allegedly allowed diesel oil to seep into wells in the village.

Hard swallow

A woman swallowed her engagement ring to prevent a robber stealing it in Bradwell, Buckinghamshire.

Late opening

Mr Cecil Parkinson, Secretary of State for Transport, was late for the opening of Hedge End station, Hampshire, yesterday because his train was delayed. "All mechanical things are bound to break down sometimes," British Rail said.



Man and wife: David Quirke and his portrayal of his pregnant wife, Vanessa, entitled "Two for Joy", for which he receives the Royal Society of Portrait Painters' Carroll Award today. The society's exhibition opens in London tomorrow

Kinnock praises local press

By Richard Evans
Media Editor

MR NEIL Kinnock yesterday accused national newspapers of bias and sensationalism, while praising the dependability of the local press.

Speaking at the UK Press Gazette regional press awards, Mr Kinnock said it was daunting to be confronted by so many journalists who could take shorthand and editors who wrote editorials. "And the facts I have from time to time with the national press."

Local newspapers were the most dependable source of information and did not dish up a perpetual dish of sensationalism. "Their campaigns are an authentic commitment to real issues of local concern, and the condition of their success and their greatest strength and value is that they live with their readers in a way that national newspapers can't or don't — and won't."

Vetoed officer withdraws

By Craig Seton

MR JOHN Wesely, whose appointment as Chief Constable of Derbyshire was vetoed by Mr David Waddington, the Home Secretary, withdrew "with some reluctance" his application for the post yesterday.

The Labour-controlled police authority immediately offered the job to Mr John Newing, deputy assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. Mr Wesely's sudden decision to withdraw broke the deadlock between the authority and Mr Waddington, who used his powers under the Police Act 1964 to veto the appointment.

An appointments panel had offered the job to Mr Wesely in spite of Mr Waddington's refusal to endorse him when he applied for the job in February. Mr Wesely withdrew in a letter yesterday to seek a High Court judicial review of the veto.

The authority said yesterday that Mr Waddington had behaved in a "lamentable" manner by overruling the local choice of chief constable. Mr Wesely was offered the job as chief constable subject to the Home Secretary's approval.

Mr Wesely, aged 52, is the force's deputy chief constable and is to remain in that post under Mr Newing, who had been interviewed twice for the post of chief constable. Mr Wesely said in his letter that a judicial review would take many months and was likely to lead to further controversy, creating unnecessary pressure on himself and members of the force. "In view of the current situation, and in the interests of the force, it is with some reluctance that I wish to withdraw my application."

Mr Newing said of Mr Wesely, with whom he spoke yesterday: "He has been extremely supportive and I am looking forward to working with him. I am delighted that he will be working for a police authority which has shown so much loyalty to one of its senior officers."

Mr Newing, aged 50, deputy assistant commissioner since 1985, has been on secondment to the Home Office leading a team developing the new Police National Computer. He was, from 1977 to 1980, staff officer to Sir David McNee, the then Metropolitan Police Commissioner.

Mr Newing: Work on police computer

Ozone link to rise in skin cancer

By Thomson Prentice
Science Correspondent

DEPLETION of the Earth's ozone layer is causing an increase in a potentially fatal form of skin cancer, specialists said yesterday.

About 1,000 people a year in Britain are dying from melanoma caused by excess exposure to the sun's ultraviolet light. The ozone layer acts as a protective screen against the rays.

The disease is becoming more common among teenagers and young adults, Dr Amar Dhillon, senior lecturer in pathology at the Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead, north London, said. Dr Dhillon and Dr Malcolm Rustin, a consultant dermatologist at the hospital, hope to launch a trial of a computerized analysis system that may help in early diagnosis of the condition.

"The rising incidence of melanoma is likely to continue as the ozone layer deteriorates further and increases leisure time permits more outdoor activities," Dr Dhillon said. "The disease can be cured by early treatment but it could be prevented by advising people that getting brown from sunbathing may be a dangerous pastime."

Professor Malcolm Greaves, professor of dermatology at St Thomas's Hospital, central London, gives similar warning in the current issue of the *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians*. He points to reduction in the ozone layer and changes in leisure activities as significant factors.

BBC finds purpose-built room for the written word

By Robin Young

THE BBC's 27,500 employees can now clear their desks. The corporation's written archive has at last obtained 14,000 extra square feet of storage space in the grounds of the monitoring unit at Caversham Park, Reading, to replace eight overstuffed Portakabins, which have been straining to contain the richest and liveliest record of 20th-century life in Britain.

The new space has cost the BBC £1.3 million, at a time, the corporate planners emphasized yesterday, of acute stringency.

Miss Jacqueline Kavanagh, the BBC's written archives officer, has been asking for extra accommodation for the past 16 years, and

reckons her wish has been granted just in time to prevent material loss of records, letters, scripts, and memoranda stored up in departmental filing cabinets and folders all round the country.

Opening the new purpose-built building yesterday the chairman of the BBC, Mr Marmaduke Hussey, said: "The *News of the World* used to market itself with a slogan: 'All Human Life Is Here'. Of course, it was not — but we could really claim that we do have it here. This is an archivist's dream, an Aladdin's Cave. All sorts of famous people have part of their lives enshrined for ever here."

A small exhibition arranged for the occasion gives some hint of the

diversity of material in the archive's 260,000 files. There are letters from T S Eliot writing to George Orwell, who, as Eric Blair, was a BBC producer; from E M Forster, Sir Max Beerbohm, Samuel Beckett, Olivia Manning, Dame Edith Sitwell, W H Auden, and Louis MacNeice, another former BBC producer.

George Bernard Shaw writes to Lord Reith proposing that the BBC should commission a symphony from Edward Elgar, following the example of the London Philharmonic Society in commissioning Beethoven's Ninth, which he describes as "by far the most creditable incident in English history". Sir Edward Elgar later writes

to acknowledge receipt of a cheque. Dylan Thomas, a little later, writes urgently: "And, if it is possible to get a little money soon, could it be got somehow, straight to me, and not through my agent, d'you think. I'm in a hell of a money mess, sued on all sides ... worried to death, ill with it."

Miss Kavanagh says some items are retrieved from unexpected places. For example, the engineering log for the announcement of the outbreak of the Second World War was recovered by a trainee from a rubbish bin at the Maida Vale studios.

One exhibit which drew a gasp from Mr Hussey was a short letter from Lord Hailsham of St Maryle-

bone, then Conservative Party chairman, thanking the BBC for its coverage of the Labour Party conference in its 1957 news bulletins, and commenting that it was vital in a democracy for people to have the full facts before them. For the sake of balance, though, there are also letters from Hugh Gaitskell thanking the BBC as well.

A file concerning the 1948 broadcast of J B Priestley's play, *An Inspector Calls*, reflects the BBC's concern over proper language. A list of words submitted for higher approval shows that Priestley was allowed to get away with a dozen mild blasphemisms, but lost one "damn", one "devil of a", one "damned", and one "my God!"

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Controls needed on loans to those who are already in debt

By Ruth Gladhill

NEW safeguards are needed to discourage lenders from making loans to people already in debt, the National Consumer Council said yesterday. In a report published yesterday, the council predicted a rise in debt difficulties as more people take out second mortgages to pay for luxuries, and as house prices fall.

The report said lenders should make better checks on people's ability to repay their debts, and seek information about mortgage arrears and secured loans: if lenders fail to make proper checks, courts should have the power to write off unpaid debts.

Most people are still able to repay their debts, despite an increase in personal borrowing from £11 billion 10 years ago to more than £43 billion today, excluding mortgages. That could change soon because many people are being lent money that they have little or no hope of repaying, and do not appreciate that they could lose their homes for the sake of a holiday or a new car.

The report *Credit and Debt: The Consumer Interest* examines 10 years of credit and debt in Britain using sources such as the banking industry, building societies, money advice services, the Office of Fair Trading and the Policy Studies Institute. When the council published its first investigation of consumer credit 10 years ago, 3 per cent of survey respondents had credit problems: that number has risen to 10 per cent. However, the evidence suggests that it is the same people using more credit rather than a large increase in new credit users.

Most people still do not

understand terms such as annual percentage rate and do not shop around for the cheapest rate. As a result, credit charges are higher than they need be and there is little competitive pressure to bring down interest rates.

One of the problems is that the people least able to afford high interest rates are those paying them. Credit use is highest among the better off and people aged 35-45, but people on low incomes who have children are most at risk of running up debts. The average amount of credit owed per household has risen from £600 in 1980 to £2,300. If mortgage commitments are included, there has been a rise from £3,000 per household to £13,000.

The report registered particular concern about home equity loans, which are secured against property and allow up to 80 per cent of the capital value of a house to be converted to credit, often using a cheque book or credit card. It cites an American survey which concluded that home equity loans were the biggest single threat to the financial well-being of consumers, who face a risk of rapid over-commitment or insolvency.

Lady Wilcox, chairman of the National Consumer Council, said: "We want to prevent over-enthusiastic use of credit by undisciplined and poorly-informed consumers. Many people are still forced by

necessity to borrow, sometimes on contracts they do not understand and at rates they may not be able to afford."

Weekly rents for council tenants across England have risen by 16 per cent from April compared with Government guidelines of 10 per cent, the Association of District Councils states in a survey published today (Christopher Warman writes).

The association, representing 295 English non-metropolitan districts, says in its report, *ADC Survey on Council Rents, Housing Subsidy and Capital Expenditure*, that rents would have had to increase by 22 per cent had not many districts been able to cushion the effects of the changeover to the new local government housing finance system by using up cash balances carried over from the old system.

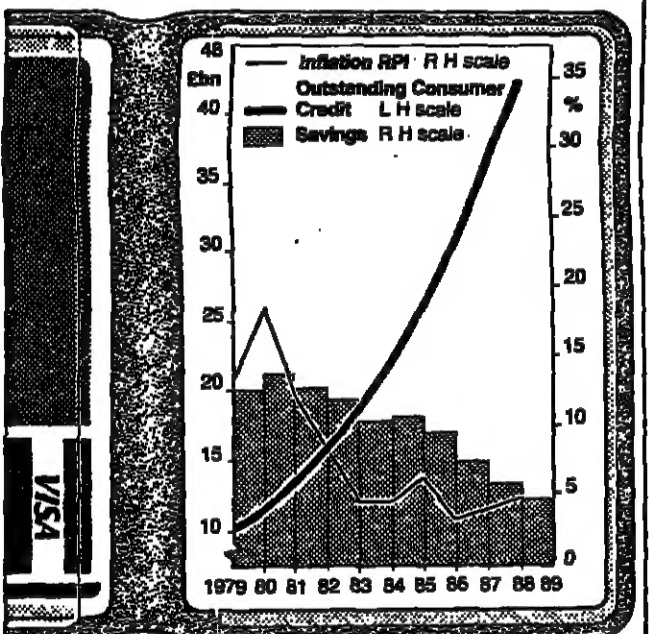
The association suggests that, in future, large rent increases are likely unless the Government agrees to proceed more slowly towards its goal of relating rents to the capital value of housing.

An estimated fall in total capital expenditure from £1.9 billion in 1989-90 to £1.4 billion in 1990-91 and £0.9 billion in 1991-92 is causing concern to the association, which fears the reduction could wipe out most of the remaining building of low-cost social housing.

Households accepted for rehousing by local authorities where main reason is mortgage default or arrears, England and Wales, 1979-88

Year	Households
1979	2,000
1980	2,500
1981	3,600
1982	4,400
1983	4,800
1984	6,300
1985	8,600
1986	10,200
1987	10,600
June 87-88	9,600

Sources: *Hansard*, June 27, 1988, and October 25, 1988



ANALYSIS

Putting off day of reckoning

By Lindsay Cook, Family Money Editor

THE average household owed £600 at the beginning of the 1980s and £2,300 by the end of the decade, without taking mortgages into account, according to the National Consumer Council. Mortgages also increased dramatically over the same period.

Interest rates may have risen rapidly over the past two years, but the British appetite for credit has not waned. It has, indeed, been fed by the loan merchants keen to replace the lucrative mortgage business with equally profitable low start loans and second mortgages.

In many parts of Britain, the high interest rates are causing people to take out new loans in an attempt to keep homes they can no longer afford, but cannot sell. Advertisements target those who are struggling to pay their bills. Companies even specialise in lending to those who have county court orders against them and cannot get loans from banks.

Financial institutions still offer instant loans through junk mail. Rates are often higher than banks and building societies, but there is no embarrassing interview for the borrower.

Brokers, building societies and banks are offering to remortgage properties, releasing money to pay other debts and reducing the monthly payments into the bargain. They do this by offering deferred-interest or low-start loans. For anyone struggling to meet monthly payments, low-start loans that allow borrowers to pay off credit cards and other debts are attractive. But loans that defer up to 7 per cent of the annual interest charged are storing up trouble for hundreds of thousands of people. The payments will rise

rapidly to their true interest level and if property prices fall, the loan could soon exceed the value of the home.

The Building Societies Commission is concerned about the rise in this market, which is risky for both borrower and lender, and is soon to limit the number of such loans that building societies can make each year.

But, unfortunately, borrowers seem to find it easier to negotiate a new, bigger loan through a broker than to speak to the companies to which they owe money. Last week the National Consumer Council pointed out that too many people in arrears do not talk to their lender.

It is much easier to take on a new loan than to admit an old one has gone sour. Advertisements for consolidation loans, which give a telephone number to contact day or night, succeed because of their very anonymity. The loans, secured on the debtor's home, can put that home in jeopardy if payments are not sustained.

Many advertisements fail to make this clear and do not give due prominence to the annual percentage rate charged. The Director General of Fair Trading, Sir Gordon Borrie, has said he will get tough with companies flouting advertisement regulations introduced in February.

But the wealth warnings are likely to have little effect on people in debt who believe they can buy themselves time. They think interest rates will come down as suddenly as they went up; that house prices will start to rise and that their problems will be over. Unfortunately for too many, they are just delaying the day when they have to face up to their debts.



Pauline Peters driving Brookfield Canadian Boy in the Novice Hackney Pony class at Royal Windsor Horse Show yesterday. The show runs until Sunday

Half of GPs barred from budget plan

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

SHORTCOMINGS in general practice computing and surgery management have whittled down the number of doctors who will pioneer one of the most radical of the Government's health reforms.

An initial assessment by regional health authorities and the Department of Health suggests that only about half of the 850 practices interested in holding their own budgets and negotiating contracts with hospitals will begin serious preparations for the scheme starting next April.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke, the Secretary of State for Health, however, is understood to be pleased both with the quality of the 400 practices going forward to the preparatory year and with the response from family doctors to one of the most contentious elements in the NHS and Community Care Bill now going through Parliament.

According to Department of Health sources, regional health authorities have had to reject about 450 volunteers because they lacked the computer back-up and practice managers to operate the new system. This will involve practices of at least 9,000 patients being given budgets of around £1 million to cover the costs of diagnostic tests and hospitalization for routine surgery such as hip replacements and cataract operations.

Only practices with computerized medical records

have been able to go forward because this is the only feasible way of rapidly supplying information on GPs' referral patterns — an essential ingredient in calculating the size of the budgets to be spent.

However, the practices that have failed to make the grade this year have been earmarked as a "second wave" of budget holders to enter the scheme in April, 1992.

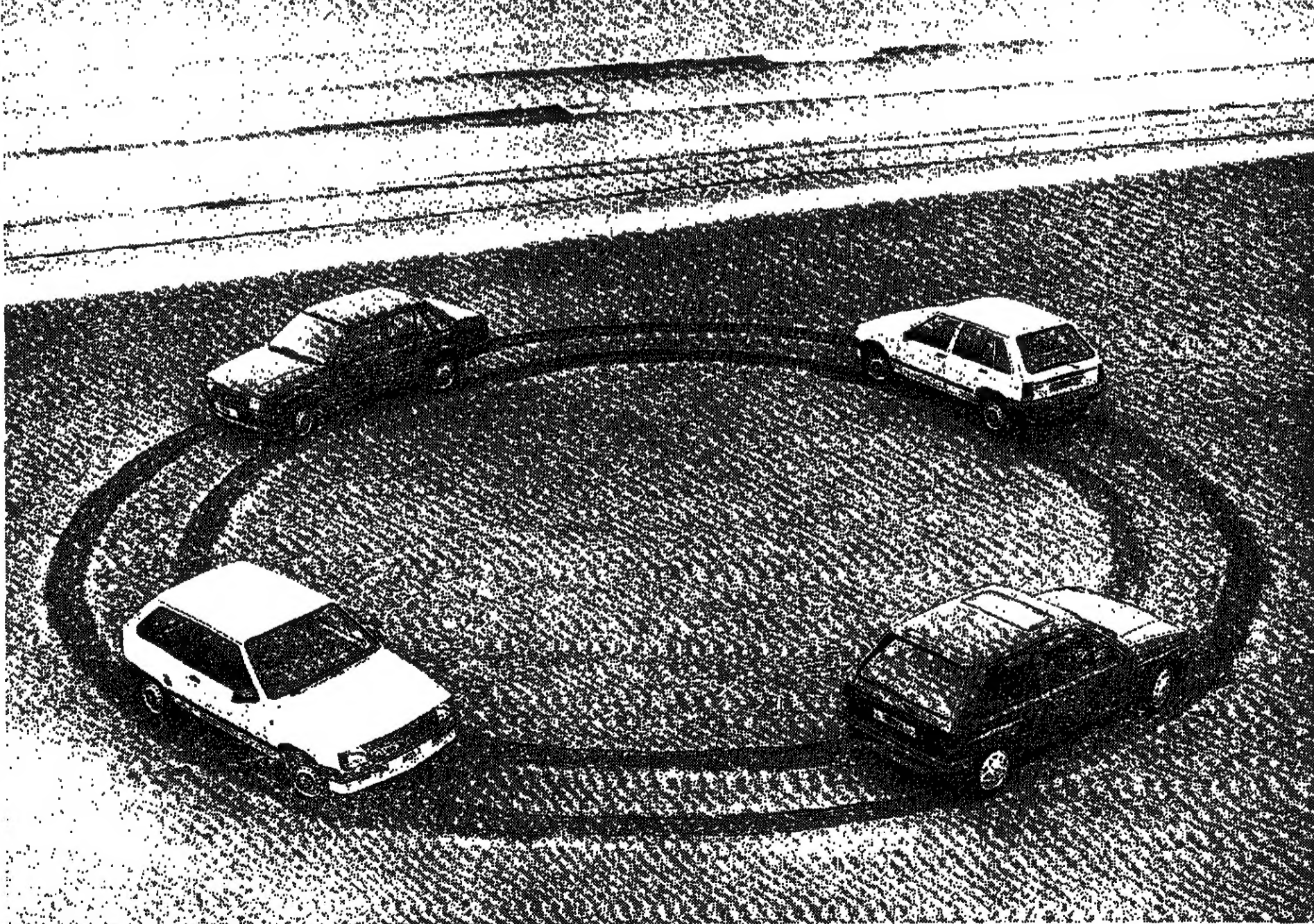
The Government was yesterday urged to put an end to the "humiliating and insensitive tests" that disabled people have to go through to prove their eligibility for social security benefits (Jill Sherman writes).

The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux said that doctors' assessments of those applying for mobility and attendance allowances led to serious repercussions, including distress, lost benefits and delays.

A report from the association calls for a system of self assessment backed by additional evidence from carers and advocates with "relevant" experience. That would provide a much better reflection of the claimant's disability and its practical implications, the report argues.

Assessing the Assessors: Medical Assessments for Disability Benefits (Information Retrieval, NACAB, 115-123 Pentonville Road, London N1 9LZ. A4 28p)

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0% APR	0% APR	11.8% APR	13.5% APR	15.2% APR
Repayment period	12 months	24 months	24 months	48 months
Other cost per year	£1,317	£1,317	£1,317	£1,317
Minimum deposit	£1,317	£1,317	£1,317	£1,317
Interest rate	NIL	14.5% 24	14.5% 24	14.5% 24
Monthly repayments	£283.20	£176.50	£146.20	£138.50
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Court clerks sound alarm at controls by Home Office

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

THE Home Office was strongly attacked yesterday by the leader of the justices' clerks in England and Wales as being "obsessed" with control of the criminal justice system to a degree that threatened judicial independence.

Mr Charles Paton Webb, president of the Justices' Clerks' Society, told members at their annual conference in Harrogate that their position was "being undermined".

The criticisms are among the strongest ever made by the usually low-profile justices' clerks, who run the magistrates' courts in England and Wales, and indicate the strength of feeling over Home Office plans to overhaul the administration of the courts.

Mr Paton Webb said the Home Office proposal for a nationalized probation service was likely to be used for the magistrates' courts.

Equivalent plans for a centralized system of administration for magistrates' courts have already been outlined in a Home Office scrutiny report.

Mr Paton Webb said courts must accept financial and management obligations highlighted in that report, but they

must also defend "to our last breath" the undermining of constitutional cornerstones threatened by the scrutiny. Where is our safeguard against the danger of our priorities being determined at a higher level, whether it be area board, agency or government department, with little or no regard for the needs of our civil justice role or other important jurisdictions of magistrates?

Ingredients essential to the administration of justice, such as "balance", were being put at risk with Home Office obsession with "control". Instead, if the present trend was pursued, courts would be striving "to cut our criminal case waiting times to achieve harder and harder centrally-set targets or to rival our identically sized nearest neighbouring division 50 miles away in the speed of their fine collection".

The justice system needed a protector who should be holding "a balance, not just a calculator". The initiators of criminal policy had a right to fight their corner, "but they should not be able to influence the way justice is administered either directly, by interfering

with judicial independence or indirectly via management strategy".

● A judge at the Central Criminal Court yesterday rebuked incompetent defence lawyers who fail to prepare cases on time. Judge Rant, QC, said more and more cases were being adjourned because the defence was not ready. He described the situation as "deplorable". He said: "Defence solicitors had better get used to the idea that cases will come on quickly, and make sure they are ready."

His comments came after he reluctantly granted defence applications in two cases to postpone the trial. The first involved the alleged sexual abuse of a girl aged eight. A defence barrister asked for the case to be adjourned so that solicitors could obtain further medical reports.

The second involved the alleged rape of a woman aged 19. The defence asked for more time to allow for a report on the effect of alcohol upon the defendant.

In both cases the victims had been brought to court to give evidence and then sent away again.



MISS Joan Scrimgeour, who is awaiting a kidney transplant, with Dr Gwyn Williams, a leading kidney specialist, who said yesterday that kidney transplant patients will live longer and suffer fewer side-effects of the operation if new research projects are successful.

About 1,500 people a year in Britain receive a new kidney, and more than 80 per cent can expect to survive at

least five years (Thomson Prentice writes). Rejection of the transplanted organ by the body's natural defences is, however, a significant problem that needs to be tackled urgently, Dr Williams, of Guy's Hospital, south-east London, said.

For reasons not fully understood, but which might be linked to the use of anti-rejection drugs, transplantation also leads to an increased risk of heart

disease and cancer in some patients. Dr Williams and colleagues are investigating ways to prevent the deterioration of kidneys after transplantation and to reduce the side-effects.

"The aim is to enable our patients to live longer, healthier lives without the need for a second transplant or a return to dialysis treatment," Dr Williams said. "There can be no real satisfaction until all forms of kidney

failure are beaten. It is realistic to hope that we will be able to give a 20-year-old patient a kidney that will last for a natural lifespan."

In spite of dialysis and transplantation, kidney disease is the fifth biggest cause of death in Britain. The projects at Guy's are being supported by the National Kidney Research Fund, which provides £1.7 million a year for research nationally.

Help with paying the Community Charge

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COMMUNITY CHARGE BENEFIT BEFORE 27 MAY
AND YOU COULD GET IT BACKDATED TO 1 APRIL

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So don't miss out. If you think you might possibly be entitled to benefit, and you haven't already applied, do it now. Not everyone will qualify but you can't lose by claiming.

Ask your local council for a claim form now. Or, if you're unable to call in to their offices personally, you can always ask a friend to do so on your behalf. Alternatively, 'phone or write to your local council offices for a claim form at once.

You've nothing to lose by claiming and you may well gain.



**Remember –
return your claim form
by 27 May**

Gas 'tariff trap' costing £100m in wasted energy

By David Young

MORE than £100 million worth of energy is wasted each year by local authorities in England and Wales, much of it because the British Gas price structure means they can save money by burning more gas than they need.

The Audit Commission has found that one county council which had previously had a good record on saving energy now has more than half its social services homes and a quarter of its secondary schools caught in the British Gas "tariff trap".

Under the price structure which British Gas was forced to adopt after a Monopolies and Mergers Commission report on industrial gas pricing, customers can switch to contract gas rates once they start to use more than 25,000 therms a year. They then pay less for their gas than customers on the domestic tariff.

The Audit Commission has found, however, that many local authority buildings while actually using only 20,000 therms a year to maintain adequate services are burning an extra 5,000 therms to qualify for lower contract prices.

The commission calculates that one secondary school which cut its energy consumption by 20 per cent by reducing its gas burn from 26,000 therms to 20,800 therms a year would see its fuel bill increase by £620.

The commission says: "British Gas has recently made several improvements to its new tariff structure, but the fundamental problem of the tariff trap remains a serious impediment to energy efficiency and should be looked at again." British Gas said that the price structure

had been amended to smooth out differences between prices in the tariff structure and the contract structure. Customers using between 15,000 and 25,000 therms have been given a 2p a therm discount to bring the two prices closer.

The commission surveyed 300 local authorities in 1985 and suggested how consumption could be cut by 12 per cent and £100 million saved. However, it has found that only a few authorities have implemented all the measures.

Mr Howard Davies, controller of the commission, said: "In view of the relatively short payback of many efficiency measures and the long-term returns, it is sad to find authorities, particularly those under most financial pressure, reducing or limiting their energy investment budgets."

Success of 'problem pubs' curb

By David Young

POLICE forces are considering adopting a scheme introduced in South Wales, which is claimed to be winning the war against lager louts.

Landlords who serve customers they know are drunk face having their licences revoked under the scheme run by police at Blackwood, Gwent.

Yesterday the police announced that the project would be extended to the rest of the force area after drink-related arrests fell during the six-month trial period.

The project was launched in Gwent after new licensing laws were passed, which meant that landlords have to apply every three years for a renewal of their licence, rather than ever 12 months.

Police feared they would have to wait too long before being able to object to landlords of "problem pubs" re-applying for licences. Now landlords face a totting-up system, similar to the points system on a driving licence.

During the six-month trial period, public order arrests fell 13.5 from 177 in the same period last year to 153.



Mr Davies: Returns of efficiency measures –

F1SHY number fetches £18,000

A FISH merchant paid more than £18,000 yesterday for the car registration F1SHY.

Mr James Jack travelled from Fraserburgh, Grampian, to land his prize catch at an auction at Chelsea Harbour, London, of registrations released by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Centre.

His winning bid of £14,500 – a total of £18,342.50 with commission and VAT – was one of the highest prices at the auction. "I've looked for it for years," Mr Jack said.

A few years ago he contacted DVLC but was told the number was not available. Then he spotted it up for auction. "I didn't think I'd have to pay that much but now it's mine for life."

Another top price was paid by Mr Andrew Wong, an

interior designer, who bid £10,000 – £12,650 in total – to secure COL 1E, his wife Colette's nickname. "She will probably be embarrassed by it," he said.

Bidding had hovered around £9,000 when Mr Wong, from Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, impatiently held up both hands and indicated £10,000. His wife would have her number plate on her own car, he said. He already has his daughter's name SOF 1Y on his own.

Mr Wong said he would keep looking for his own AND 1E and LOR 1E for his son.

Phillips hopes to raise a record £3,500,000 from the two-day sale of 617 registrations, the third to be held on the instructions of the Department of Transport.

Ministers doing 'all they can' for the hostages

MINISTERS will do everything they can to bring about the release of all hostages, short of making concessions or striking bargains with those who hold them, Mr Douglas Hurd, Foreign Secretary, said in the Commons yesterday.

He added, during question time, that the policy was guided by a desire for a safer, not a more dangerous, world and that British policy was "on all fours" with that of the United States.

Mr Gerald Kaufman, chief Opposition spokesman on foreign affairs, had asked him to

FOREIGN OFFICE

agree that there must be no deals which either rewarded hostage-taking or gave incentives to further hostage-taking.

"That being so, will Mr Hurd respond to the charges made by the released United States hostage, Mr Frank Reed, and the Syrian Foreign Minister, that we have not been sufficiently active in the release of hostages?"

He asked for an assurance that the Foreign Office was active, day in and day out, in efforts to secure the release of British hostages since British people were saying that, because hostages of other nationalities were being released, they had every right to expect the release of British hostages as well.

Mr Hurd "They have every right to expect day in and day out efforts on our behalf to that end, and I assure him that those efforts continue."

He had every sympathy with Mr Reed, who had carried himself through a terrible ordeal, but he was not in a position to know anything about the efforts Britain had made on behalf of the British hostages. He did not regard the Syrian Foreign Minister as an entirely objective observer of these events.

In reply to Mr Harry Barnes (North East Derbyshire, Lab), who raised the matter, Mr Hurd said: "We are delighted that Mr Reed has confirmed that John McCarthy is alive and in reasonable condition. Mr Reed's release indicates that Iran and Syria can, if they wish, secure the release of hostages."

Mr Barnes: "Just what are the efforts the British Government is involved in? Will it stop taking an intransigent stance and seek to develop a position in which it can at least talk about diplomatic relations being es-

ablished with the problematic regimes of Syria and Iran?"

Mr Hurd: "We follow up every lead and use every contact which we think might bring results."

Mr Peter Temple-Morris (Leominster, C) raised the case of Mr Roger Cooper, languishing, he said, in prison for four years. He had been close to release last year when "certain events took place."

Mr Hurd: "We have three substantial problems with Iran: the hostages; Mr Cooper who has been in prison in Tehran for four-and-a-half years; and the Rustafai affair, where the Iranians maintain the threat to the life of a British citizen, as well as demands on the British Government in that respect that we could not meet. I have made clear that we have indirect contacts. I do not rule out direct contacts if we felt that they were likely to produce results, but the restoration of diplomatic relations is certainly not a matter for us alone."

"We broke with Syria in 1986 on the issue of state-sponsored terrorism, an issue which remains unresolved. We have had indirect contacts since then with them on behalf of the hostages."

Sir David Steel, Liberal Democrat spokesman on foreign affairs, suggested that since Britain had broken off diplomatic relations some time ago with Syria and Libya, now that other governments had acknowledged that they were helpful in the release of hostages, it was time to reconsider.

Mr Hurd agreed that the Syrians had been able to help. "I do not remove the background I have mentioned and, at this stage, the future nature of our contacts with Syria must depend on the prospects of success."

Letters, page 15

Plea for dialogue on Lithuania

LEADING the people of Lithuania to expect help in their fight for independence of a kind that could not in reality be forthcoming from the West would be irresponsible, Mr William Waldegrave, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, told the Commons.

Replying to a question about the situation in Lithuania, he said that the Government had repeatedly emphasized the need for progress through dialogue between the Soviet authorities and Lithuania so that a settlement, acceptable to both sides, could be reached, allowing the Lithuanian people to decide their own future.

"This was the theme of the Prime Minister's message to Mrs Prushinskaya (Prime Minister of Lithuania) when the latter called on her at 10 Downing Street this morning."

Mr Michael Jack (Fylde, C)

INDEPENDENCE

said that the Government was to be supported in its endeavours to encourage the people of Lithuania in their fight for freedom. Did the Government properly recognize the legitimate claims of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia in their quest for freedom?

Mr Waldegrave said that no British government, of either party, had ever accepted the incorporation of the Baltic states as a result of the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement.

Mrs Margaret Ewing (Moray, SNP) said that the Government should emphasize to President Gorbachev the need to recognize the Helsinki Agreement and the right of people to determine their own political status.

Party broadcasts attacked

TV CHANGES

AN ATTEMPT to relieve commercial television channels of the requirement to show party political broadcasts failed in the Commons during the second day of the report stage of the Broadcasting Bill.

Mr Timothy Raison (Aylesbury, C), moving an amendment to end the obligation, shared with the BBC, said that party political broadcasts were not the highest of art forms. He would like to see an end to them altogether. He knew of no one who looked forward to seeing them as part of their regular television fare.

Research on the effects of party political broadcasts was undertaken by the broadcast and the parties, but none was prepared to reveal the outcome of that research.

His experience of them was standing on St Stephen's Green, outside the Houses of Parliament, in a howling gale trying to persuade voters of the merits of buying council houses. He did not believe he had influenced anyone of the rightness of his cause.

To provide the same party political programmes on five channels could not be said to be fulfilling the intention of the Government to give diversity. Even the Derby and the Cup Final were not broadcast on all channels.

Mr Robert Maclean, Liberal Democrat spokesman on home affairs, said that the importance of party political broadcasts was that they enabled parties to get across their messages unadorned by the editorial comment of broadcasters.

Most newspapers were sympathetic to the Conservative Party which enjoyed a predominance of coverage. Even coverage of the Commons concentrated on the Government of the day.

Mr Julian Critchley (Aldershot, C) said that by proposing the end of party political broadcasts, Mr Raison deserved the gratitude of the nation.

The British liked nothing more than slumping in front of the television set from 6.30pm to 11.30, rising only for a call of nature or to switch channels.

Once the news dawned upon them that a much loved politician was to embark upon a five-minute broadcast of mendacity, assertion and amplification, they got up to prepare themselves a hot milk drink.

The Tory Party had earned the gratitude of the manufacturers of Ovaltine.

Mr Bruce Grocott (The Wrekin, Lab) said that he would regret the abolition of party political broadcasts as the best means of mass communication. Some Conservatives might argue for paying for commercials on television in the horrendous way which occurred in other countries.

Mr Robert Cryer (Bradford South, Lab) said that most of the national and provincial press tended to support the Conservative Party. Political broadcasts might be mocked, but they were a way of helping to retain the balance.

Mr Alistair Darling, an Opposition spokesman on home affairs, said that on balance he thought that party political broadcasts ought to be kept even if they provided a boost for the Ovaltine industry.

If they were going to be shown everywhere, it would not be right that the BBC should carry them but not other channels.

Mr David Mellor, Minister of State, Home Office, said that it was important that parties had direct access to television. It was not too high a price for the absence of political advertising which there would otherwise have to be.

The amendment was withdrawn.

Mr Roy Hattersley, chief Opposition spokesman on home affairs, moved an amendment the effect of which would be to stop Mr Rupert Murdoch and his UK companies from holding a licence to provide satellite or local cable and microwave television services.

He said that he mentioned Mr Murdoch by name because it would not be right to be mealy-mouthed about these matters. Mr Murdoch already had a substantial ownership of newspapers and magazines in the United Kingdom, as well as an expanding television interest.

In order to obtain ownership of American television com-



Greeks 'must free driver'

The Government came under pressure at question time in the Commons to press the Greek authorities to release Mr Paul Ashwell, the lorry driver arrested while allegedly transporting parts of an Iraqi supergun.

Mr David Winnick (Walsall North, Lab) said that immense harm was being done to relations between the two countries because of the driver's detention.

Mr Francis Maude, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, said that the Government accepted Mr Ashwell's innocence and would make clear to the Greek authorities the strong feeling in Britain.

Cannabis haul is bigger

Customs authorities seized 50,715 kilograms of cannabis, with a street value of £166,750,000 last year, according to provisional figures given by Mr Richard Ryder, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, in a Commons written reply.

Both figures are the highest for any of the past 10 years, and compare with 1988 figures of 44,018 kilograms with a street value of £127,340,000.

New peer

Lord Morris of Castle Morris, formerly Mr Brian Morris, Principal of St David's University College, Lampeter, and chairman of the Museums and Galleries Commission, was introduced as a Labour peer.

Parliament today

Commons (2.30): Questions: Northern Ireland; Prime Minister; Broadcasting Bill, third reading; Private Bill. Lords (3): National Health Service and Community Care Bill, committee, seventh day.

Ashdown boasts of party's 'London electoral asset'

By Robin Oakley
Political Editor

MR PADDY Ashdown, the Liberal Democrats leader, said yesterday that the local government elections had demonstrated that the Labour Party could not achieve the defeat of Mrs Margaret Thatcher on its own. It had failed to deliver the "killer blow".

Saying that the Liberal Democrat vote nationwide had been 18 per cent, a level of support hailed as a miracle when it was achieved under Mr Jeremy Thorpe at the general election in 1974, Mr Ashdown added: "There is only one third party now, and it is us."

At a press conference at Westminster after detailed scrutiny of the local election votes, he predicted: "Labour's lead is going to be trimmed back inevitably. Labour was suffering from a 'London effect', but the Liberal Democrats had shown by their consolidation in Richmond, Sutton and Tower Hamlets that they had a 'London asset'. The Liberal



Democrat leader said that Labour had advanced only in areas where his party was not strong; it had made progress only where there was a vacuum. "The case remains that we have pulled in votes the Labour Party cannot reach."

Mr Ashdown was at pains to deny the suggestion by com-

mentators that the Liberal Democrat recovery was good news for Mrs Thatcher and her Government, insisting that, although the centre party recovery might help Labour in about thirty seats, there were many more seats where the Alliance had run the Conservatives close in second place in 1987.

Mr Ashdown, whose personal opinion poll ratings have improved by 10 percentage points over the past six months, said that the Liberal Democrats had now recovered from repairing "the terrible damage we did to the party and its image" over the two years after the general election. He added: "Putting the party back together again is now over."

He said that the Green Party had been repulsed in all areas of Liberal Democrat strength, although it had taken 8 per cent of the vote elsewhere.

He conceded, however, that his party had suffered in areas such as Milton Keynes, where they had been running the local authority with Conservatives.

Labour's 'safe marginal'

By Richard Ford, Political Correspondent

MR ROY Hattersley launched Labour's campaign in the Bootle by-election yesterday, saying that the party would treat its fifth safest seat as if it were a marginal.

Opening the campaign in the Merseyside seat, the party's deputy leader said the key issues would be the poll tax, the state of the economy and the record of the Prime Minister and her Government.

He said Labour must produce a good result in Bootle to confirm that the party's support was surging throughout the country and that it was on course to win the next general election.

"The unavoidable and inevitable challenge in a safe Labour seat is to produce a result which all demonstrates that Labour is surging ahead all over the country," Mr Hattersley said. "We over the country." Mr Hattersley said. "We propose to achieve that result by fighting this by-election campaign as if the seat were marginal."

He was in Bootle to support Mr Mike Carr, a full-time Transport and General Workers' Union official, who, unless the by-election caused by the quake, will win the by-election caused by the death of Mr Allan Roberts. Mr Roberts had a majority of 24,477.

Mr Carr, aged 43 and married with four children, chaired the co-ordinating committee sent to run the Labour Party in Liverpool on the orders of the ruling national executive committee.

Mr Carr, who was born in Bootle, told a press conference yesterday that the main issue was the

poll tax; the local Sefton District Council has set a figure of £373. "So many people are worrying about how they are going to find the extra money to pay - people like my mother-in-law."

Later, Mr Kenneth Baker, chairman of the Conservative Party, began his party's campaign with an attack on Mr Carr, whom he accused of rising without trace. "He is a Kinnock place-man. His role is to be mute and invisible," Mr Baker said.

The Conservative candidate, Mr James Clappison, is making his second foray into solid Labour territory. In the last general election, Mr Clappison, aged 33 and a barrister, fought Barnsley East, which Labour won with a majority of 23,511. At the outset of his campaign Mr Clappison tried to exploit the difficulties Labour has faced with Militant Tendency on Merseyside.

He said: "The extreme left is still very much in place in the Labour Party in Merseyside. The selection of the Labour Party candidate in this constituency has caused a local uproar. It looks like nothing more than a cheap confidence trick to tell the people that Merseyside is free of left-wing influence."

Nominations for the by-election close tomorrow at noon. The only candidate whose nomination papers have been received is Mr Kevin White, who is standing for the Liberals. General election: A Roberts (Lab), 34,975; P Papworth (C), 10,498; P Denham (SDP/All), 6,820. Lab maj: 24,477.

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Soviet leadership puts on unity show at Moscow parade

From Mary Dejevsky, Moscow

LOOKING down the expanse of Gorky Street towards the red walls of the Kremlin yesterday morning, it was possible to imagine Moscow in the grip of a military coup. This broad shopping street was covered for its complete length with troop carriers, tanks and armoured cars. Soldiers directed the few pedestrians, checking passes at every crossroads.

Outside the immediate vicinity of the Kremlin, access to central Moscow was cut off by police and army officers patrolling shoulder to shoulder. Even on Gorky Street, however, the occasional shop was open and people were buying newspapers as usual at the kiosks. There was the same strange mix of abnormality and normality that reportedly accompanies the most surgical of military takeovers.

Half an hour later, on Red Square itself, the Kremlin clock struck 10, the massed bands played, the cannon boomed in the background and the bells of the Kremlin churches rang out in a cacophony which suggested the discord reputed to exist between

the party and state leadership, on the one hand, and the military on the other — a discord supposedly personified by President Gorbachev, who is also the Communist Party's general-secretary, and the Defence Minister, Marshal Dmitri Yazov.

In the week before yesterday's parade much was made of military discontent with President Gorbachev's reform programme — from a report that one unit had mounted a show of strength against Mr Gorbachev in February to an apparent media consensus that officers had sat "stony-faced and silent" as the President spoke of top-level dissatisfaction within the military and called for it, too, to be subject to reform.

The first report is still a matter of conjecture and interpretation. The second is not true. President Gorbachev was not heard out in "stony silence" at the Bolshoi Theatre on Tuesday night. He was heard with a good deal of sympathy, especially when he enumerated the military leaders killed or repressed by Stalin and condemned Stalin's

blindness about Hitler's preparations for war.

Applause, at times a little limp, and murmured approval punctuated his address. His speech was well-tailored to his audience and his call for reform of the military — an aim he presented unambiguously in his inaugural address as President — was muted and careful.

Military officers of several generations relaxing in Gorky Park yesterday described the speech as the most sympathetic to the Army Mr Gorbachev has ever made.

It was tempting, but always too simplistic, to see yesterday's parade as a sop granted by the state leadership to the military top brass to keep otherwise unhappy officers happy. It may be more accurate to see it as an attempt by the two sides to present a united face to the Soviet public and the world. It should not be assumed that this unity is for presentational purposes only.

President Gorbachev's lengthy speech on Tuesday evening and Marshal Yazov's short address at the Victory Day parade yesterday showed a reformist leadership and an established Army with a proud tradition doing their best to give the other the benefit of the doubt and reach a public accommodation about their priorities and objectives.

There is indeed dissatisfaction within the military for well-known and predictable reasons, chief among them the cuts in defence allocations, the "retreat" from Eastern Europe and the plight of demobilized officers and service families evacuated from trouble spots in the Soviet Union.

But there is also support for reform from those who acknowledge that the Soviet armed forces have lagged behind the West technologically, and that the lines on which the armed forces are currently organized will have to be changed radically.

For whatever reason, President Gorbachev and the military leadership appear to have decided that they must — and can — work together.



Mrs Prunskiene meeting members of Britain's Lithuanian community outside Downing Street yesterday. She flies to Paris today

UK sympathy for Vilnius

By Michael Knipe, Diplomatic Correspondent

WITH Lithuania's supplies of oil due to run out in 20 days, Mrs Kazimiera Prunskiene, the Lithuanian Prime Minister, left Downing Street yesterday convinced, she said, that Mrs Thatcher would not remain on the sidelines in the dispute between Moscow and Vilnius.

She said she made no specific requests of Mrs Thatcher, but expressed the hope that the British leader would use her good relations with President Gorbachev to resolve the dispute.

Mrs Thatcher gave no specific undertakings, the Lithuanian leader said, but there were several ways in which she could help in seeking a solution to the crisis and she would choose the method that was best for her.

Whitehall sources said that Mrs Thatcher was more optimistic after the meeting that a way forward could be found. Both prime ministers had agreed, they said, that it was necessary to find a practical solution to the issue of Lithuania's independence while preserving the gains made in East-West relations. This should be resolved through discussions and a solution found which would be satisfactory to both sides.

It would be impossible for Lithuania to rescind its declaration of independence because the Lithuanian deputies had been elected on a mandate to achieve independence.

But what they could do, said Mrs Prunskiene, would be to suspend the laws passed since the declaration which would be in accordance with a formula presented by President Mitterrand and Herr Helmut Kohl, the West German Chancellor. Her conversations with Mrs Thatcher had convinced her that this position was acceptable to the British leader also.

Asked what would happen after May 25, Mrs Prunskiene said she still hoped that the situation could be resolved in discussions with Moscow before that date. She described the actions of Moscow as cynical and said they would have a chain reaction in Latvia and Estonia and would harm the Soviet Union itself.

Russian studies in 'serious' decline

By Andrew McEwen, Diplomatic Editor

TEACHING of Russian and East European studies in British universities is "seriously inadequate" and could lead to domination of the field by the US, France and Germany, according to senior academics.

Their findings were disclosed by Sir Bryan Cartledge, the former British Ambassador to Moscow, in a speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs. He also attacked Britain's lack of preparedness to meet economic opportunities arising from the opening up of the Soviet Union.

British companies would be "seriously disadvantaged" unless the Government gave higher priority to advising them on trading in the Soviet Union during the difficult transitional period following the collapse of the old order.

Sir Bryan, now Principal of Linacre College, Oxford, said that the Government had

commissioned an assessment of the academic situation after strong criticisms by the Commons foreign affairs committee. He took part in a review of 32 universities, colleges and polytechnics which found that the provision was "seriously inadequate" both for the national need and for student demand, which in some cases had tripled.

The review found that improvements could be made for £9 million spread over 14 years. After an earlier report in 1979, which led to the closure of Russian and Slavonic departments in 10 British universities, the situation "can... be corrected only by positive intervention", he said. "We were and are concerned that if the situation... does not change, and quickly, a whole field of learning and intellectual activity... will be the monopoly of... America, France and Germany."

Not just *the odd* word.

Expert find
adult Aids
epidemic in
Romania

THE
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64 PAGES

Expert finds adult Aids epidemic in Romania

From Christopher Walker, Bucharest

DISTURBING new evidence has emerged that Romania is suffering a serious spread of Aids among adults in addition to the paediatric epidemic uncovered after the overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu, who decreed that all statistics on the disease were "state secrets".

The discovery comes after years in which communist-run Romania lied to world organizations about its alleged non-incidence of Aids, always depicted in the official media as a disease afflicting capitalist societies. Only now is the horrific nature of the cover-up being exposed.

In an interview with *The Times* Dr Jacques Lebas, the leading French Aids expert who helped confirm the original epidemic among Romanian children, disclosed that the first tests just completed among a random sample of 7,000 adults in Romanian hospitals showed that 40-0.6 per cent - were HIV-positive.

Dr Lebas said after a four-day visit: "It has now been discovered that there is an adult Aids epidemic as well. This is very serious news for the country, and will require an urgent strategy to be drawn up by the authorities to counter it."

The doctor, president of the voluntary group, *Médecins du Monde*, and one of the world's leading authorities on the Aids disaster in Africa, said that, most unusually for Europe, there were signs that the Romanian epidemic was predominantly affecting heterosexuals as it had in the worst-hit African nations.

The French team says it is too early to say with certainty the extent of the disease among ordinary Romanians, as more tests are needed. Extrapolation of existing statistics gives 576 adults per 100,000 in the 23 million population as HIV-positive.

In one infectious diseases hospital I visited, there were 60 children suffering from Aids, and five adults," he said. "All the adults were young

and heterosexual, which is a different pattern than we are used to in Europe."

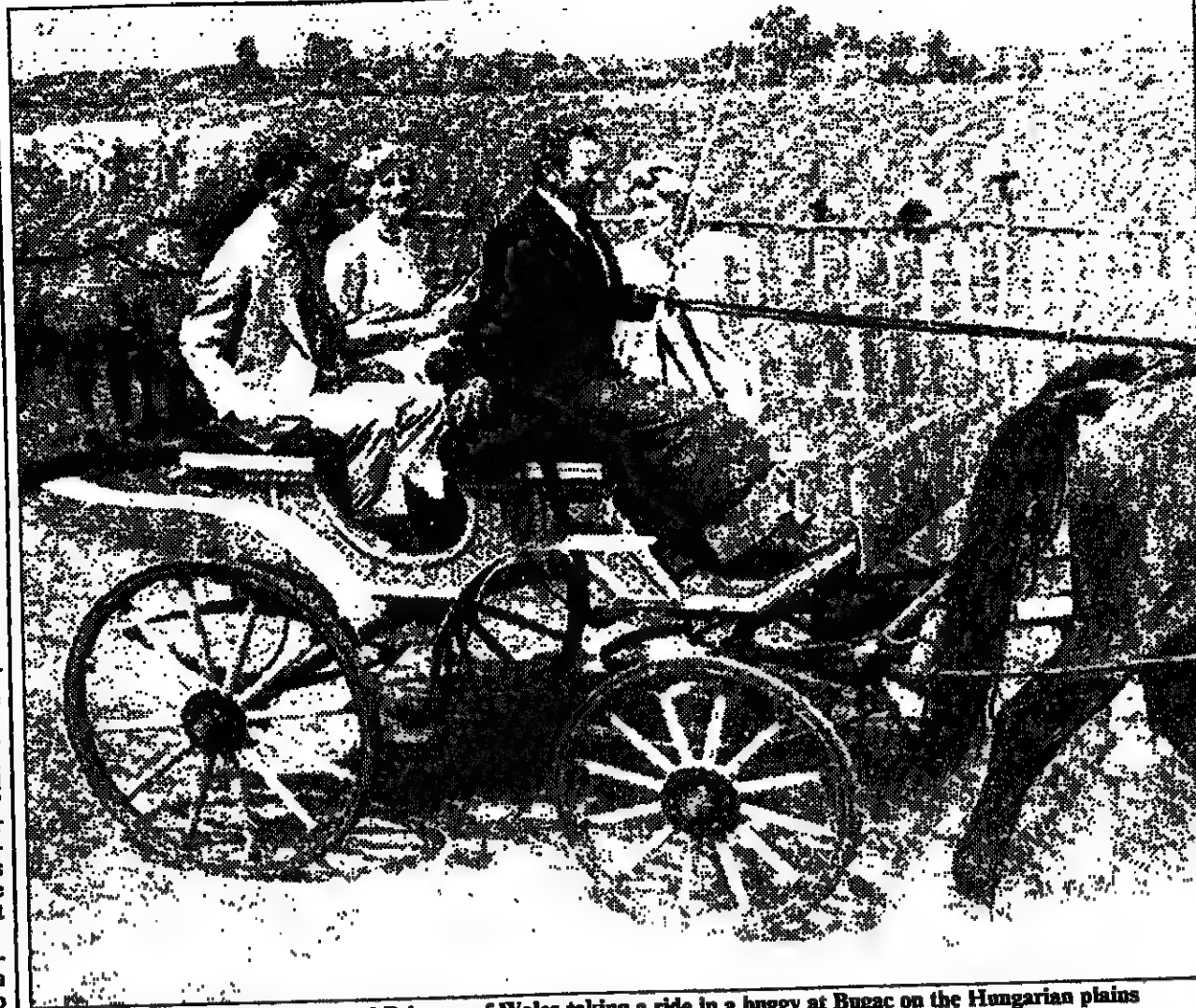
Dr Lebas said that alarming new statistics were now with the two-month-old Romanian National Aids Commission, which was drawing up a campaign to cope with the adult epidemic. Further investigation was required to provide concrete evidence of how it was being spread. He added: "Back in January, when the children's Aids epidemic was found, it was still claimed that the few admitted adult cases were 'imported' from abroad. It is now clear this was not the case. Although the rate of infection is less than the 10 per cent figure among Romanian children, it still counts as an epidemic."

Neither Dr Lebas nor members of the 15-strong French medical team are yet willing to offer firm conclusions about how the virus has been spread here. Dr Lebas said the spread did not fit the European pattern. There was not a high incidence of intravenous drug-taking, one of the main reasons for Aids affecting heterosexuals in the West. "My guess is that it is probably being spread heterosexually as in Africa."

Although medical experts are puzzled by the possibility of a link between the way Aids is spreading in Romania and Africa, the high incidence of malnutrition and poor treatment of other sexually transmitted diseases in both places will be among issues studied.

The Romanian paediatric Aids epidemic is unique because in all but 3 per cent of the children affected the disease was introduced by infected blood or needles used for injections.

Dr Lebas discovered that although conditions had improved greatly in the main Bucharest hospitals coping with child Aids victims, they remained "shocking, inhuman and unhygienic" in many of the more than 200 overcrowded orphanages.



Plain talk: The Prince and Princess of Wales taking a ride in a buggy at Bagac on the Hungarian plains

Big rise in East German jobless

From Ian Murray, Bonn

THE number of unemployed in East Germany rose sharply and the number of vacancies fell last month as the predicted shake-out of unproductive workers gathered pace. Officially, there were no unemployed at all under communist rule six months ago.

Now there are 64,948 registered, an increase of 26,635 on March, and 48,858 are drawing the dole. The number of jobs on offer dropped by over 10,000 to just 73,558.

The figures, announced by the official ADN news agency, show that workers of all categories are losing their jobs, with around 12,000 having qualifications, another 36,000 skilled and only 16,000 unskilled. Around 1,000 have started retraining so far.

The rapid introduction of a free market economy is therefore taking its toll even before the massive investment expected to follow the planned

economic and currency union on July 2. Gloomy predictions already suggest that the phasing out of old production methods and the introduction of new assembly lines by Western companies is likely to cause massive unemployment, which could reach four million before the investment begins to create new jobs.

The economy has been slowing down significantly since the old communist regime was toppled. The motivation to work seems to have dwindled, in part because people worry that currency union will bring soaring inflation in its wake, as subsidies are eliminated without any compensation in pay packets.

Many just do not concentrate on what they are doing, carried away by the excitement and uncertainties of their new democratic freedom. The result is that, in the first quarter, industrial production fell by

4.7 per cent and construction dropped by 14 per cent.

Faced with the prospect of unemployment and falling living standards, East Germans are continuing to leave for the West at the rate of around 4,000 a week. So far this year, even though free elections were promised from the start and have now been held, 178,708 new settlers have registered in West Germany.

They are no longer refugees from a political system but economic migrants, preferring to try for a better life now rather than watch their living standards deteriorate at home while they wait for better conditions to arrive.

After currency union is introduced they will lose all special benefits paid to those arriving in the West, but they will still be able to move if they want to look for work in the booming economy in West Germany. In contrast, the

expectations are that East German industry will have to endure a bleak period with wholesale layoffs in industries which are long overdue for mechanization. There are, for example, 42,000 brewery workers now, but the number is likely to drop by 80 per cent.

Facing up to Western competition will prove difficult, if not impossible, for many industries. Manufacturers of consumer goods such as cars, washing machines, shoes and clothes cannot match the range, quality and price of Western products and are therefore likely to have to close down.

Trabants, the two-stroke, environmentally unfriendly car which East Germans patiently waited up to 10 years to purchase, are finding no buyers.

People with the money are preferring to pick a second-hand Western make.

Gift of Nagy medal for Prince

From Alan Hamilton, Budapest

THREE veterans of the 1956 Hungarian uprising who asked to meet the Prince of Wales yesterday presented him with a bronze medallion commemorating their hero, Imre Nagy, the executed Prime Minister.

Survivors of the revolution, brutally put down by Russian tanks, have formed the Committee for Historical Justice to spread the truth of that year's events, long suppressed under Hungary's former communist regime, and to honour the memory of the 400 who were executed for their part in the abortive bid for freedom. The committee hopes to erect a statue of Nagy in Budapest, and is raising money for a memorial to the others who died.

The Prince met Mrs Judit Maletier, widow of the then Hungarian Defence Minister who negotiated with the Soviet Army to withdraw their tanks from the capital in November, 1956, and who was arrested when he went to the Soviet military headquarters to sign the agreement. He was tried and executed two years later.

Mr Laszlo Regesz, who also met the Prince, was an employee of the British Embassy who smuggled the manuscript of Nagy's book exposing the evils of communist rule out of Hungary for publication in the West. He was tried and spent six years in prison.

"I could not be happier at recent events in Hungary," Mr Regesz said. "We fought for freedom in 1956, and only now have we witnessed the final victory of the revolution, although by other means. The people who claimed to be the vanguard of the working class proved to be a failure; they ran us into the ground. Democracy will succeed in Hungary, but our ruined economy is a different matter; we feel like passengers on a sinking ship."

The Prince said he was honoured to accept the square bronze medal, which has also been presented to President Bush and President Mitterrand on recent visits to Hungary, and to President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia.

Liberals arrested in Kuwait

KUWAIT THE pro-democracy movement in Kuwait was in disarray yesterday following the arrest of Dr Ahmed al-Khatib and seven other politicians seeking to reconvene the Kuwait parliament dissolved four years ago (Juan Carlos Garmucio writes).

Dr al-Khatib was arrested while addressing a meeting which was declared illegal, and the others, for refusing to heed a warning to end it. There is rising tension over a controversial government plan to call elections on June 10 for an interim parliament with limited powers.

Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmed al-Sabah, the Emir of Kuwait, wants it to advise on the shape of Kuwait's future democracy. At least 30 former deputies opposed to the Emir's project launched a campaign last year to try to revive the parliament dissolved in 1986. They have announced that they would boycott the June election.

Unesco staff stage protest

PARIS - About 400 staff stopped work for two hours to demonstrate outside a board meeting at Unesco Paris headquarters, saying that the organization had reached a constitutional crisis due to a \$6 million (£3.7 million) overhaul announced by the Director-General, Señor Federico Mayor in February. The 10-day meeting will discuss Señor Mayor's defence of his reform.

Staff criticize Señor Mayor for creating 40 top posts at a time when the agency's budget should be cut. A recent auditor's report said senior officials were overpaid and given illegal perks, while former employees were brought out of retirement to do their old jobs. (Reuters)

French break rail record

PARIS - France's high-speed TGV train broke its own world rail speed record yesterday with a run that topped 320 mph, a spokesman for the SNCF national railway said.

The new record was set on a TGV Atlantic track near Tours in central France by the train that established the previous record of 302 mph on December 5 last year. (Reuters)

THE EUROPEAN

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Europe's first national newspaper

Europe has begun a revolution greater than any in its history. The decade of the 1990s will see the birth of a new Europe, a Europe of peace and prosperity. In the West, the economies of the community are prospering. Despite still too high inflation and still too high unemployment, the general mood is optimistic. The general mood is optimistic. The general mood is optimistic.

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Arab show of force marks further intifada milestone

From Richard Owen, Ramallah, occupied West Bank

THE cars were still smouldering as we came out of the hotel. Round the corner, police were already interrogating the Arab staff, but no one, it seemed, could identify the attackers.

"They came with axes and petrol bombs, smashed the windows of the cars and set them alight," one witness said. "It all happened in a flash."

Description? "They all wore masks — the keffiyeh (head-dress), wrapped around their faces."

The intifada yesterday entered its 30th month, marked by a general strike in the occupied territories called jointly by the underground leadership of the Palestinian revolt and Hamas, the banned Muslim fundamentalist organization.

For much of the outside world the uprising has slipped from view two and half years on. Many wrongly assume it has either died out or been reduced to the kind of sporadic disturbances which characterized Palestinian unrest in the 20 years from 1967 to 1987. In reality, the intifada has taken hold to the point it is routine, part of the everyday fabric for Palestinians, Israelis and foreign residents alike. To

some extent, Israeli forces have succeeded in containing the revolt and reducing casualties.

The underground leadership of the intifada, moreover, appears divided. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, one of the more radical factions, has begun issuing its own instructions in separate leaflets — a serious breach of the principle of "unified leadership".

The Palestinian population itself seems divided on how to proceed, and the response to some recent strike calls has been patchy. In addition, there is widespread unease over the vicious killing by Palestinian extremists of alleged Arab "collaborators" with the Israelis. In one recent case a 40-year-old Arab in Gaza, whose only apparent crime was to work for the Israeli bus company, was knifed to death after refusing to "confess" publicly at the local mosque.

These gruesome murders have cost the Palestinians much of the moral support they enjoyed from the West at the start of the revolt. Intifada leaders are aware that the uprising no longer dominates Western television screens. In part, this is the Palestinians'

own fault: in some cases Western newsmen have themselves become the victims of Arab violence, as Palestinians turn in frustration on the media they once saw as their main hope. Some foreign and Israeli television crews are refusing to venture into the West Bank any longer.

But the inner momentum of the uprising has not faltered. Every week cars are set on fire in Jerusalem, the targets usually being Israeli-owned rental vehicles. A sustained police campaign has failed to stop the arson attacks. Ramallah, where Israelis from West Jerusalem used to visit to patronize Arab restaurants on summer evenings, is now as firmly off limits to Israelis as the state of Palestine had already been declared.

A similar invisible line divides Jerusalem. Every day the intifada inches closer to the daily lives of Israelis. In Jerusalem this week two young Arabs from Hebron on the West Bank were arrested for seizing a soldier's rifle at a bus-stop in the Jewish suburb of Gilo. Anyone driving to the West Bank is advised to have reinforced plastic windows installed. There is a long waiting list at my garage for such protective shields.

With the political right in Israel on the rise, some Israelis — notably the powerful Orthodox religious parties — are demanding "tough action" by Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Prime Minister, to suppress the intifada. Mr Ariel Sharon, the former Defence Minister, is a vocal proponent of such a crackdown. Backed by senior figures in the Shamir Government, militant Jewish settlers have grown increasingly confident, taking over a series of properties in the predominantly Arab old city of Jerusalem.

Labour coalition accord

JERUSALEM In the face of opposition from "doves" on the party's left wing, the Israeli Labour Party leadership yesterday decided in favour of joining a new national unity coalition with the right-wing Likud party, provided Likud agreed to "take the peace process forward". (Richard Owen writes).

The decision was seen as a victory for Labour hawks led

by Mr Yitzhak Rabin, the former Defence Minister. But there was no sign that Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Likud leader, and transitional Prime Minister, intends to invite Labour to form a broad coalition of the kind which collapsed in March after 15 months because of disagreements over the Middle East peace formula put forward by Mr James Baker, the US Secretary of State.

Lebanese cleric rules out a swap for Sheikh Obeid

From Juan Carlos Gumucio, Jibchit, southern Lebanon

UMM Mujahed Obeid apologizes profusely. Her two youngest children are playing noisily in the living room of the house. There is no coffee. And she does not wish to talk about hostages. Not even when her husband, Sheikh Abdel Karim Obeid, the Shia Muslim cleric kidnapped by Israeli soldiers nearly 10 months ago, is one of them.

"Sorry," she says, as she reaches for Mushaba, her three-year-old son who has climbed onto a coffee table below the portrait of Ayatollah Khomeini, the main feature of the room.

Does little Mushaba or his four brothers and sisters know that their father was seized at gunpoint and is being held against his will? "Sorry, I do not want to say anything. It is better like this." There is a pause. "I just hope all of the hostages, all of them, will go free one day."

It takes a brief walk across the village to the house of Sheikh Obeid's successor to realize how weak Umm

Obeid's hopes really are. Sheikh Ahmed Ali Taleb is the temporary imam of Jibchit and lives in a house with a panoramic view of the village, the minaret of its new, white mosque towering above olive groves and rooftops. He is an urbane young man with a mind.

For him, the Sheikh Obeid proposal to free Israeli prisoners in exchange for Israeli prisoners in Lebanon is an unacceptable proposition. Sheikh Obeid was kidnapped, he says. The soldiers that Israel wants back were captured in combat. And a swap could prove extremely counter-productive: exchanging Israeli prisoners of war for Sheikh Obeid, he says, would create a dangerous precedent.

"If the Israeli prisoners of war are exchanged for Sheikh Abdel Karim, what would stop Israel from kidnapping other Lebanese men of religion the next time our fighters capture soldiers attacking our people in our land?" he asks.

But for this 26-year-old cleric, who spent 10 years at the theological school in Qom, Iran, the kidnapping of Sheikh Obeid went beyond the mere crime of abduction. "He is a man of religion, he taught Islam," he says. "He was at his home, with his family. He had no guns."

When he is reminded that nor did the British, Americans, French, West Germans and others who were abducted by Shia Muslim extremists in Beirut since 1985, he smiles. He obviously sees a difference. "I wish you foreigners

could understand the nature of our struggle," he says. "Israel, the West, have political power, aircraft and guns to enslave us... they, whoever began kidnapping foreigners, had none."

"Kidnapping became their only weapon."

And the Israelis, too, used it. Early on Friday, July 28, 1989, an airborne unit of Israeli commandos landed in Jibchit and seized Sheikh Obeid and two of his aides, a cousin, Ahmad Obeid, and Majid Fahs. A neighbour who came out to find out what was happening was shot dead.

Sheikh Taleb brushes aside the Western allegations that Sheikh Obeid was the mastermind in the abduction of US Marine Colonel William Higgins in February 1988. "He is a man of religion," he insists. "We demand his immediate and unconditional release. No deals, no exchange. We want Sheikh Abdel Karim first."

● JERUSALEM: Lieutenant-General Dan Shomron, the chief of the Israeli armed forces, apparently hardening the official position, said yesterday that the three Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon must be returned before Israel would swap its Arab prisoners for Western hostages.

"I imagine we will be happy to swap and all those being held will be freed, including Americans and Israelis, and we will free those we hold," General Shomron said in an Israel Radio broadcast. "But clearly first of all we will want to see our captives here at home," he said. (Reuters)



The Pope waving to thousands of young Mexicans before celebrating Mass at San Juan de los Lagos, where he urged the crowd to oppose political corruption and drug trafficking. In a speech in Mexico City to diplomats, he called for international solidarity to ease Latin America's debt burden and help refugees rebuild their lives

Students in clashes with Seoul riot police

Seoul

TENS of thousands of South Korean students took to the streets in protest against the country's new ruling party yesterday, leading to the most widespread fighting with riot police in more than a year.

Up to 5,000 radicals battled police outside the US cultural centre in central Seoul, smashing windows in the building and setting one room alight with petrol bombs. Firemen said that the four-storey centre was unoccupied at the time.

More than 10,000 young radicals earlier blocked a main road in the capital, chanting slogans demanding the overthrow of President Roh Tae Woo and dissolution of his new Democratic Liberal Party (DLP). "We have skyrocketing inflation, skyrocketing real estate prices — Roh Tae Woo, get out," read a banner hung across the front of the Bank of Korea, the country's central bank.

Mr Roh was unanimously declared leader of the ruling DLP at the party's first national convention yesterday. The party was formed in February after he and leaders of two out of three opposition parties agreed to merge into one grand coalition.

Riot police had blanketed the city for most of the day to try to prevent student protests, but they seemed unprepared for the scale of the demonstration. One witness said at least two riot police buses were burned and almost 50 policemen overpowered by students, who took away their tear-gas masks and shields.

"We'll put an end to the DLP — which can't even get 10 per cent of the people's support — through the people's strength," read a leaflet handed out by students.

Outside the US cultural centre, students used petrol bombs and rocks in their battle with riot police. Witnesses said metal shutters on front windows of the building were forced open and window panes smashed. A US embassy spokesman said it was too early to gauge the amount of damage at the centre.

The students also chanted slogans against government intervention in labour disputes. (Reuters)

'Uncle' in the Elysée losing his magic touch

From Philip Jacobson, Paris

AS A great political survivor, President Mitterrand may not be too troubled by the dismal opinion poll ratings that mark the beginning of his tenth year in office this week.

His personal popularity has certainly dropped, but with France's next presidential election not due until 1995, Mitterrand will count on bouncing back for the umpteenth time.

In sharp contrast, the ruling Socialist Party is in obvious trouble, awaiting with some nervousness the outcome of the no-confidence motion expected in the National Assembly tomorrow. While most observers here expect Communist votes to keep Mitterrand's minority Government in power, as they have on three previous occasions, it seems disenchanted with Mitterrand is spilling over into growing hostility to the Government.

According to recent polls, a general election now would see the Socialists swept away after just two years in office. Given the pathetic state of the mainstream conservative opposition — consumed by internal feuds and menaced by the revival of the extreme-right National Front — it could be a long, hard slog to hold out until going to the country in 1992.

Talk to prominent Socialists and the "Elysée factor" soon crops up: for the first time in years, President Mitterrand is seen as a potential political handicap. One faction worries that the French have come to see the President as a profoundly Machiavellian figure, reaching out

from the Elysée to leave his mark on every aspect of government.

The present parliamentary censure motion is a case in point. It arises from a long and squalid controversy about granting amnesty to MPs charged with electoral corruption that culminated in the case against a former Socialist minister being dropped. Nobody could be more cynical about politicians than the French, yet this murky and damaging affair is being laid quite specifically at the President's door.

It is a telling reflection of Mitterrand's present standing that another view holds him to be altogether too remote and detached from the main issues of the day. He is blamed for forgetting campaign promises about tackling racism in French society, about a fresh policy to solve unemployment, and what happened to all that talk about social justice and an egalitarian society? The praise from abroad now being lavished on France's flourishing economy cuts no ice with many of those who voted Socialist last time round. The franc may be riding high, the Bourse booming, investment and productivity rising — but why the repeated Government calls for wage restraint among the lower paid?

The image of Mitterrand rubbing shoulders with world leaders is also losing some of its magic for the French. Going for Mrs Thatcher over European Community integration is still popular enough, but it requires no great genius to understand that the Germans are now firmly in the driving seat. Some French observers believe that President Mitterrand's efforts to walk the world stage are becoming counter-productive back home.

In the circumstances, the publication of an acclaimed new biography, *Le Président*, by M Franz-Olivier Giesbert, editor of the conservative *Le Figaro*, was surely the last thing Mitterrand wanted for his tenth anniversary. By no means a complete hatchet job, it recognizes his extraordinary durability and shrewdness and the central contribution he has made to shaping the France of today.

On the other hand, it provides a cutting portrayal of an instinctive political manipulator "who does not allow himself to be burdened by scruples when power is at stake".

Small wonder, then, that Mitterrand is now emerging from the opinion polls in rather better shape than the man who appointed him two years ago. The word at the time in the Mitterrand circle was that Mitterrand would not last the course. But today, his low-key image of work and more hard work, apparently untainted by socialist political intrigues, strikes a more receptive note with the country at large.

Is the great man in the Elysée aware of the ground shifting beneath him, of the need to persuade his countrymen that he is still *Tonton* at heart? In an uncharacteristically defensive performance on television recently, Mitterrand observed that righting social inequality would be the main theme of his remaining years in office.

Albania introduces reform package

Vienna

ALBANIA has lifted a ban on religious propaganda, and abolished the death penalty for defectors in a package of human rights reforms to Europe's last orthodox communist system.

In a series of legal changes that further opened the once-reclusive Balkan state to the outside world, the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Manush Myftiu, also announced plans to give all Albanians the right

to apply for a passport to travel abroad. "It is our constant duty to enhance the care of human rights," he told a session of parliament in Tirana in detailing the reforms on Tuesday. His speech was published yesterday by the official ATA news agency, which said the changes had been approved.

The reforms, the most far-reaching in the human rights field since the communist state was founded in 1946,

were published two days before the United Nations Secretary General, Javier Pérez de Cuellar, visits Tirana. But they were cautious compared to the other radical changes in Eastern Europe.

They were announced at the same parliamentary session at which the Prime Minister, Mr Adil Carani, declared Albania's readiness to join the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. (Reuters)

Cheney defends nuclear strike option

From Martin Fletcher, Kananaskis, Canada

AS NATO defence ministers yesterday began a two-day meeting on the Western alliance's post-Cold War nuclear posture, Mr Richard Cheney, the US Defence Secretary, set the scene for a heated debate by insisting the 25-year-old "flexible response" strategy for protecting Western Europe must remain unchanged.

He said that, despite the Warsaw Pact's collapse, NATO had to maintain both the right and capacity to launch a nuclear first strike in response to a conventional Soviet attack and had to deploy new Tactical Air-to-Surface Missiles (TASMs) in West Germany and elsewhere.

Although President Bush announced last week that the US would not modernize its short-range, ground-based nuclear weaponry in West Germany, that had "no effect" on Washington's plans to deploy TASMs, he said.

Mr Cheney's statements, which British officials supported, ran counter to the strongly-held view of West Germany and the smaller NATO countries, including Belgium and The Netherlands, which are opposed to the deployment of TASMs on their soil and believe that the Warsaw Pact collapse warrants a thorough re-evaluation of the alliance's nuclear strategy.

West German officials believe that the deployment of TASMs — capable of striking the Soviet Union — would send quite the wrong signal to Moscow which is presently fighting a strong rearguard action against the idea of a united Germany in NATO.

The Americans plan to try to avoid debate on TASMs at this meeting, in a snow-covered Rocky Mountains resort, of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group. But with the meeting opening with an unusual "open discussion" of the Western alliance's policy in the light of recent events in Eastern Europe, that appeared a forlorn hope.

Although Mr Bush said last week that the NATO summit in July should instigate the broad review of alliance strategy, Mr Cheney made it clear that this should concentrate not on the basic doctrine of flexible response but on the level of forces. Like the President, he emphasized that there had to be a continuing nuclear component in the alliance strategy.

He told reporters that "at this point I don't see any need to change the basic fundamental strategy" of the alliance, which involved the deployment of US troops in Europe, a single military command structure, and the potential first use of tactical nuclear weapons, backed up by strategic nuclear weapons, if the Soviet Union invaded Western Europe. Mr Cheney said he was "not eager" to remove the flexible-response strategy even after the expected completion of a treaty this autumn which would end Moscow's huge superiority in conventional forces.

● Troop pullout: The Soviet Union believes that all foreign troops stationed in Europe should be withdrawn by 1995-96 as part of a new security framework for the region, Mr Oleg Grinevsky, the Soviet Ambassador to the conventional arms talks in Vienna, said yesterday (Michael Evans writes).

He described as a key step the agreement, announced in Ottawa in February, to restrict US and Soviet troops in Central Europe to 195,000.

But he insisted that the developments in Europe required deeper cuts in troops and armaments. The Soviet arms negotiator was giving the inaugural Mountbatten Lecture at Southampton University.

Blockade imposed by Aoun

From Our Correspondent, Beirut

AFTER three consecutive days of savage shelling, Lebanon's inter-Christian war spilled violently onto the Mediterranean coast yesterday when General Michel Aoun imposed a sea blockade to prevent the Phalangist Lebanese Forces militia from receiving ammunition and supplies.

As General Aoun's artillery concentrated fire on the coast of Beirut and the Jounieh area, Mr Samir Geagea, the Lebanese Forces commander, instantly retaliated with rocket attacks on units and residential districts under control of the Army.

Thousands of civilians who are still living within the devastated Christian enclave were trapped in underground shelters as shells and rockets rained down on the ruins of their homes.

Nearly 40 people have been killed and at least 80 have been wounded since the artillery battles intensified on Monday in what seemed to be the prelude to a decisive confrontation in the three-month war.

Conservative estimates say that nearly 1,000 people have died since General Aoun declared war on his one-time allies in an attempt to become the undisputed leader of the Christian community.

Supply ship bids fond farewell to Napoleon's island of exile

From Alastair Guild, St Helena



Captains Bob Wyatt, left, and Martin Smith, waiting to take RMS St Helena on her last voyage to the isolated community in the South Atlantic

RMS St Helena sets sail today from Avonmouth on what is likely to be its last voyage to the remote Crown colony whose name it carries. It is to be replaced on its regular run by a new ship, twice the size, being built in Aberdeen.

Captains Martin Smith and Bob Wyatt take it in turns to command the eight-week round trip, which includes Cape Town on the way back. After many years of sailing the West African coast, they both vividly remember their first sight of the island's sheer cliffs, 12 years ago.

"I know how Napoleon must have felt when he saw the island for the first time in 1815," says Captain Smith. "From a distance, it stood like an impenetrable fortress," recalls Captain Wyatt. "As we got closer, it was the layered rock, the vivid changes in colour which we noticed. Then, as we drew yet nearer, we caught a whiff of the smoke

from the islanders' wood fires."

The smell of woodsmoke may not be as strong as it was — many islanders now have electricity, and Color Gas cookers. But their welcome for the 27-year-old RMS St Helena seems as enthusiastic as that accorded to the regular steamship sailings when they began in the middle of the last century.

St Helena, one of only 13 remaining Crown colonies, is 4,500 miles from the UK and 1,694 miles from Cape Town, well away from any shipping lanes. The nearest airstrip is 703 miles away on Ascension, and the island is remote enough to have its own unique bird species, the wirebird. So the St Helena represents the island's only regular contact with the outside world.

"There's always somebody looking out to sea, to catch the first glimpse of the ship," says Captain Wyatt. In the island's

"capital" and seat of government, Jamestown, the atmosphere is totally transformed on "ship day".

Most of St Helena's 6,000 population flock in from all parts of the 10 x 6 mile island, on foot, by motorcycle or in one of the 1,800 registered cars or lorries. There is fierce competition for the town's 200 parking places.

However late the ship arrives, the post office will stay open into the night to hand out mail, on average 130 bags per voyage, some bringing money from relatives working overseas — two of the largest communities are in Southampton and Portsmouth. The stores, which range from pianos and cars to baked beans and cream crackers, are snapped up from the town's shops in a day or two. The ship also carries livestock, banknotes, and when necessary, a travelling judge.

The passenger list is published in advance in the *St Helena News Review*, the island's newspaper. Anyone interesting will be asked to talk on the local radio station, which has featured two British ambassadors to South Africa, who were returning to Britain by sea on their retirement, and in 1980, Prince and Princess Bonaparte on a souvenir Napoleonic cruise, with 70 French passengers.

Some passengers have liked the island so much they have stayed. Captain Wyatt says: "There is the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank manager, who went ashore, came back to the UK to settle his affairs, and returned to retire." Captain Smith adds: "There is a sense of total peace. You don't hear or see anything, apart from the occasional aircraft's slipstream, miles overhead, or a rare ship passing far away on the horizon." But on "ship day" the atmosphere is rather more frantic.

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back trac
campaign
tax pledge

but she lives
the shadow of
THE SHADOW
OF DIABETES
BRITISH DIABETIC

Bush poised to backtrack on campaign tax pledge

From Susan Elliott, Washington

AMERICANS are frantically trying to reread their President's lips. Until last week, he was the leader who promised: "Read my lips! No new taxes." Now, the pledge which helped carry him to the White House looks shaky following his decision to try to sort out his country's budget woes.

This, Washington concluded, signalled that taxes would be on the table. In an attempt to calm the ensuing panic, Bush Administration officials have said that taxes are not necessarily on the agenda. They are simply not off it. The White House has refused to say whether the President is ready to talk about raising taxes.

Mr Bush's decision to tackle the nation's deficit marks a reversal of his position three months ago when he told Congress he was not contemplating bipartisan negotiations to reach a deal. Since then, economic conditions have forced him to reconsider.

Government revenues have fallen while rising interest rates have boosted spending. Administration officials say that Mr Bush, spurred by

growing concern in Congress about the expanding deficit, simply decided the time was right for action, even at the risk of appearing to backtrack on his no-new-taxes pledge.

The Administration has been under pressure to address the budget problem for some time. Mr Bush's main aim will be to draw up a package of spending cuts and revenue rises that will prevent the automatic imposition of across-the-board spending cuts this autumn under the Gramm-Rudman deficit-reduction law.

Mr Bush would like to avoid Gramm-Rudman's axe. The law, which sets \$64 billion (\$39 billion) as the limit for the federal deficit next year, would trim about 20 per cent off spending for defence and other domestic programmes without consideration for the priority of projects.

Traditionally, Republicans have linked themselves with lower taxes, while the Democrats have admitted, usually to their peril, a willingness to raise revenues through taxation.

Already, the Bush Administration is rushing to placate the nervous Republicans, while the Democrats are seeking to avoid the blame for forcing the White House to consider new taxes. The Bush Administration has repeatedly accused the Democratic-led Congress of contributing to the budget shortfall by irresponsibly overspending the President's approved budget.

The latest readout on Mr Bush's lips is that "no new taxes" really means "no new income taxes". Political experts point out that the Bush Administration has already raised or introduced some taxes but disguised them as "user fees", such as increases last autumn in taxes on airline tickets and social security payments.

The most likely new tax would be on petrol. A 25-cent increase on a gallon of petrol would bring in an estimated further \$25 billion a year, or around half the amount estimated necessary to avoid the Gramm-Rudman cuts. For Mr Bush, who took office proclaiming himself the "environmental President", an energy tax would also have the advantage of appealing to America's flourishing green movement.

It may, however, encounter opposition in Congress from members of large Western states which have little public transport.

Californians, for example, are bound to complain that an energy tax unfairly targets them over the residents of cities on the East Coast who do not need to drive long distances.

Canadians drug unruly deportees

From John Best, Ottawa

A POLITICAL storm has blown up in Canada over disclosures that unco-operative deportees have been sedated by government medical personnel to get them to leave the country quietly.

Opposition MPs have denounced the practice, calling it inhumane and a violation of the national charter of rights and freedoms. Mr Dan Heap, the New Democratic Party's human rights spokesman, said that "not even convicted criminals" were subjected to such treatment. However, under sustained opposition questioning in the Commons on Tuesday, Mrs Barbara McDougall, the Immigration Minister, refused to give an undertaking that the practice will be halted.

She said that some immigration enforcement officers have been injured while escorting reluctant deportees. Mrs McDougall also argued that the Government has a responsibility to protect the other passengers on an aircraft carrying a deportee.

She said that of 3,125 illegal immigrants deported since January 1, 1989, only nine were given drugs - for medical reasons or to calm the potentially dangerous.



Journey's end: The crew of a Hong Kong police patrol boat lining up on deck to survey a boatload of Vietnamese they had just intercepted. The boat people had travelled overland through China before making the hazardous sea journey. This week a plane carrying 125 boat people left Hong Kong for Hanoi, bringing to more than 2,000 the number who have returned home voluntarily under a UN-sponsored programme

Hong Kong promises inquiry into camp claim

From Jonathan Brande, Hong Kong

THE Hong Kong Government has promised an investigation into complaints of heavy-handed police action against women and children during a weapons search at Hong Kong's largest Vietnamese camp last week.

The move follows an outspoken attack by Mr Philip Barker, the Hong Kong field director of Save the Children Fund, who said the brutality of the pre-dawn operation at the 22,000-inmate Whitehead detention centre left many people "shocked and terrified". Vietnamese in the camps, he said, reported that tear gas was sprayed directly into the dormitories, forcing inmates to leave. "Some mothers who could not get ready quickly enough claim they were pushed and hit by the police with batons."

The Government Refugee Co-ordinator, Mr Mike Hanson, said all the allegations would be passed to the Complaints Against Police Office for investigation. However, he defended the raid against accusations of brutality and said the police had acted with restraint.

"The purpose of the operation was to find and remove weapons from the camp. They found and removed over 2,500 very dangerous weapons," he said. Any complaints of aggressive police searching of women and children would also be investigated, but he claimed that the search itself was justified. "In the past women and children have had weapons," he said.

Chinese threat to curb Muslims

From Catherine Sampson, Peking

THE governor of the north-west Chinese region of Xinjiang has threatened to crack down on religious activities in the predominantly Muslim area, which was shaken by what Peking officials called an "armed counter-revolutionary rebellion" last month.

"We should intensify supervision of religious activities and the venues for such activities," said Mr Tomur Dawamat, the governor of the autonomous region, speaking on the "quelling of the counter-revolutionary armed rebellion" at a meeting of the regional congress, which was shown on television.

Attempts to curb religious activities are likely to aggravate further Muslim anger against the Chinese, said a separate Islamic state. According to Peking, those who rebelled last month intended to wage a holy war to set up a republic of East Turkistan.

The Chinese authorities are extremely concerned at the fact that many of the instigators of the unrest have escaped the police net and are still at large. "They're terrified," said a diplomat of the authorities.

Officials have played down the extent of the unrest in Xinjiang, knowing that few foreigners were there to see it and eager to present to the world a facade of stability and unity. However, a Western diplomat familiar with the region said: "The scale of propaganda just doesn't tally with a small incident."

He doubted that officials recruited from among the Muslim minorities would turn against the Han Chinese, since "their tradition is rather dependent on the Chinese staying there". But officials apart, "there looks as though there was widespread popular support... the intensity with which the authorities are pursuing religion gives the same away."

Official accounts give a death toll of 22, but there have been unofficial reports of nearer 50 dead. In the Xinjiang daily newspaper, gory accounts have been given of the uprising in Akto county, emphasizing the ruthlessness of the Muslims.

By all accounts, the Muslims were armed with axes, guns, and grenades, and it was necessary to airlift in Chinese troops.

Diplomats believe that the arms came from Pakistan and Afghanistan, and that the Chinese are involved in a diplomatic offensive to halt the flow of such weapons.

But the Chinese are not using diplomatic means alone. The Khunjerab pass between Pakistan and China was closed because of snow and was not opened at the start of May, as originally planned.

The foreigner, who travelled extensively in the area shortly after last month's revolt, said the weapons, mainly guns, were intended for simultaneous uprisings in six oasis towns along the ancient Silk Road on the 17th day of the Ramadan festival (April 13). The revolt was to be led by Abul Kasim, described as an Islamic spiritual leader and commander-in-chief of an underground movement for an independent "Free East Turkistan" in Xinjiang.

The plot was exposed and the Chinese sent militiamen to investigate, who were killed by the rebels, leading to further battles with Chinese security services, he said. (Reuter)

USSR CHINA KHUNJERAB PASS PAKISTAN INDIA

Sarawak tribes battle against jungle loggers

From Mary Kay Magistad, Muia, Sarawak

THE young Penan tribesman drew a poison dart from the case slung over his shoulder and loaded it into his blowpipe. He took aim at a small bird flitting through the jungle canopy, and blew. The bird fell silently.

"It's not so easy living off the forest now," said Moss, aged 25, as he pulled out another dart. "We used to be able to find wild boar and other animals in just a few minutes. Now we can hunt for days and find nothing. We have to walk much further for the fruit trees and plants for medicine we have always used. The logging is destroying them. That's why we are trying to stop the logging."

The Malaysian side of Borneo island, one of the world's oldest and most diverse tropical rainforests, is steadily losing the battle to a lust for quick profits. Logging companies have accelerated their pace, keeping a 24-hour vigil in some camps to speed the transformation of quality tropical timber into money in the bank.

Left in the lurch are more than half a million native tribespeople, who have lived as part of the rainforest ecosystem for thousands of years. Perhaps more than any of the other 20 or so tribes in Sarawak, the Penan are especially feeling the pinch. While the other tribes were traditionally farmers as well as head-hunters, the Penan avoided both practices and lived as jungle nomads. The State of Sarawak recognizes tribal customary rights only of cleared and cultivated land, however - leaving the Penan with nothing, officially, to call their own.

"Their knowledge and unity with the forest is something that's not really matched anywhere in the world," said Mr Grant Rosoman, a New Zealand environmental activist who recently spent weeks visiting remote Penan longhouses. "But now their ecosystem is changing irretrievably - and it's destroying their way of life."

Logging in Sarawak is big business - and big money. Malaysia's timber exports - worth more than \$1.5 billion (£398 million) annually - account for more than half of the world's export market. And while the Malaysian Government siphons off

royalties from Sarawak's huge oil industry, the Sarawak state Government keeps whatever logging revenues it earns. Some of Sarawak's government officials profit much more directly. Chief Minister Tan Sri Taib's family owns almost four million acres of logging concessions - about one-third of Sarawak's total. Mr James Wong, the Environment Minister, owns rights to log another huge swathe of virgin rainforest.

The political pork-barrel and staggering profits from logging in Sarawak have created an instant class of millionaire politicians, and environmental activists have charged. They say it's no coincidence that Sarawak's only car factory manufactures BMWs.

But Sarawak's political elite insist that the trickle-down effect works - even if the people don't realize it yet. Chief Minister Taib has claimed that logging has helped to "civilize" the natives, and put money in their pockets. "We were told we would get hundreds of thousands of dollars from the loggers," said one tribesman from a longhouse on the Tutoh River. "But we've received almost nothing. They take our land, they log our forests - and life just gets harder."

The Penan, joined by a handful of other tribes, have refused to go down without a fight. Over the past three years, they've put up a series of blockades to stop the loggers from going any deeper into virgin rainforest. Elderly headmen in loin-cloths and bangles, tribal women with four-inch diameter logs hanging in their unbelievably stretched earlobes, and naked toddlers lined up in front of the bulldozers and demanded a stop to the logging. Dozens of the men were promptly thrown in jail for illegally blocking "state" land.

Meanwhile, logging has gone full-speed ahead on the contested territory.

Pretoria rights Bill urged

From Gavin Bell, Johannesburg

THE Chief Justice of South Africa has called for the establishment of a national Bill of Rights, enforceable by the Supreme Court on the pattern of the United States, to safeguard civil liberties in a post-apartheid era.

Mr Justice M.M. Corbett told the South African Institute of Race Relations this week that the process would not be easy, and when he was at the Bar he had found a good compromise was one that never wholly satisfied either party. "I imagine that much the same principle must apply to constitutional negotiations. An essential ingredient was a Bill of Rights, but by itself it could be no more than a Utopian statement. It required enforcement machinery, which should be invested in the Supreme Court."

During a visit to the US in 1976, he had been deeply impressed by the power of its judiciary, headed by a confident and secure Supreme Court in the fullest sense of the term. "It struck me with all the force, suddenness and clarity of a spiritual revelation that... the answer was possibly to be found in the American example."

The American system was one of several models considered by the South African Law Commission, which published a draft Bill of Rights last year. It is now evaluating submissions from the public, with a view to compiling a final

report. Mr Justice Corbett regards it as an outstanding piece of work, and welcomes subsequent suggestions that the final version be part of a constitutional settlement.

"This will give the Bill a binding force that could never have been achieved by simply parliamentary legislation. However, it was of paramount importance that the judiciary should be the supreme arbiter and executor of civil liberties. 'Justiciability' in a court of law by way of judicial review there obviously must be. There are evidently in various countries Bills of Rights which are not justiciable in this way, but they must be hollow, worthless things."

Colombian cocaine ring broken in New York

New York - A Colombian cocaine trafficking organization in the New York area, dealing in drugs worth \$20 million (£12 million) per month, has been broken up with the arrest of 17 people and the seizure of a well-fortified Long Island farm.

An official of the Immigration and Naturalization Service was also arrested and charged with taking more than \$100,000 in bribes to provide drug smugglers with identification as permanent US residents, officials said. (AP)

Activists held

Harare - Six activists of the opposition Zimbabwe Unity Movement have been detained in the Midlands town of Gweru under emergency powers regulations. (AFP)

Stasi suicide

East Berlin - General Peter Koch, aged 60, the secret police chief ordered in December by Herr Hans Modrow to break up the Stasi, has committed suicide. (AFP)

Paid back

Warsaw - A provincial court has awarded 37 million zlotys (£2,380) in compensation to Mr Franciszek Slowik, imprisoned for more than six years on a false conviction during the Stalinist prosecutions of the 1950s. (AP)

Ankara attack

Ankara - The response of Turkey to Amnesty International allegations of continuing human rights abuses is that "the report seems to be a photocopy of the previous one". (Reuter)

'Rebel shot'

Monrovia - President Doe of Liberia said he believed that the leader of the current rebellion, Mr Charles Taylor, had been shot in an internal feud and was being treated in hospital in the neighbouring Ivory Coast. (Reuter)

Destroyer docks

Norfolk, Virginia - The guided-missile destroyer USS Conyngham, damaged by a fire which killed a sailor and injured 12 others, docked yesterday at the Norfolk naval station. (AP)



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The poll tax: let the people choose

My hope and belief is that the Conservatives will win the next general election. Central to achieving this are a significant reduction in the inflation rate and the restoration of rising real living standards. Falling interest rates could fuel this virtuous circle next year, reinforced, I hope, by Britain's entry into the Exchange Rate Mechanism. The political divide will then narrow, and despite the local election results, I foresee recovery worth the name for the centre parties.

Secondary issues may, however, remain of more than usual significance, and the community charge will retain a powerful national importance.

In many of the marginal constituencies by which the tenure of power is determined, the community charge is perceived to have broken the Disraelian compact upon which Tory power rests. Principally in the North-west, Yorkshire and the West Midlands, but stretching ominously into parts of southern England, is a belief that it is either too high, unfair, or both, and it has created a lingering sense of injustice. I have never known so large a postbag from those with a life-long commitment to the Tory cause who, having bought their homes, saved to ensure their independence and budgeted carefully for their old age, feel badly let down.

To these must be added recent recruits: council-house buyers and the couples in terraced houses who last year paid £250 in rates and this year face bills of more than £700. They have no doubt about whose fault that is. They are not political philosophers, just people on tight budgets. They have to be won back to their natural political home. There is no time to be lost. There will be no second chance.

It is little wonder that local government remains at the centre of political debate. It spends £36 billion a year, administers essential services and presents to our citizens the largest single bill that many of them ever see. But it is neither that local nor that simple. Central government pays most of the costs and has the overriding mandate to prescribe the quality of public services.

We want local choice, but only to an extent that is compatible with the responsibility of ministers for national standards. We want strengthened local accountability, a healthy local democracy and a system of finance which is perceived to be fair.

It is in unitary local authorities that the accountability emerges most clearly. I doubt if the stunning local election results in Wandsworth and Westminster would have been so conclusive had the community charges there been confused by precepts from the GLC or ILEA. People need to know who is responsible. So I am increasingly persuaded that we should restore the identity of the old single-tier county borough for our major urban areas, to provide a more effective framework of local pride and local accountability. I favour paid, directly-elected mayors in command, in order to bring local spending under con-

trol, together with tougher value-for-money audits. I am sceptical about the practice of central government distributing more than £20 billion by formula, with few questions asked.

In the short term, the pressure is on to contain or reduce the present levels of community charge and to make it fairer. These are the two real grievances. But the stark facts are that inflation is approaching 10 per cent and that wage claims are damagingly close to double-figure disaster. This alone will add a good £70 to the £700 charge on the terraced-house couple.

And this assumes that local authorities raise no more than what is required to cover wage inflation. This bitter experience tells us is a forlorn hope. They will pray in aid the cost of introducing care in the community, plus the phasing-out of the safety net and transitional relief.

I see no purpose now in rehearsing the old arguments about the wisdom of introducing the charge, for one overwhelming practical reason. There is no realistic prospect that the Government will do other than fight the next election with a community charge in place. But most people in my party now agree that it needs considerable modifications. So let us focus on some possible key changes.

The critical judgement is how much more the Treasury can or should pay. To this must be added the question, are there any other ways of raising money to defray in part the demands on the Treasury? Only the Department of the Environment can calculate the implications of any proposal. But outsiders can influence the priorities.

In the first place the concept that most people should pay something directly for their local services makes sense. Secondly, we have to avoid next year's sudden leaps in bills arising from the Government's own decision.

Then we should look at conspicuous examples of grievance and remove them wherever possible, but in approaching this we must remember the harsh truth that it costs £1 billion to reduce the average charge by only £28.

There are many variants on the theme that the Treasury must pay. The crudest suggestion of all is that the Government should increase the central grant by more than £3 billion to prevent next year's inevitable increases solely to meet wage inflation. There is, of course, no reason to believe that local authorities, on receipt of such unprecedented largesse, would pass on more than a small fraction of it to the hapless citizen. There would be a bonanza of public expenditure, with only a gesture of charge reduction, especially on the part of the Labour councils. To Labour, the higher the community charge, the more attractive its general election pledge to abolish it will sound.

The burden of the community charge could, of course, be cut by transferring the funding of some services to central government, but in practice the Government



Michael Heseltine suggests higher payments by the better-off and an obligatory election when a council wishes to exceed spending levels laid down by the Government

might find itself blamed for poor standards and find it difficult to resist pressures for ameliorating expenditure. Income tax might have to rise, and, again, there is little to ensure that local authorities, relieved of expenditure, will reduce the community charge as opposed to seeking out new opportunities to spend.

One solution advocated is the introduction of a general "cap", no council allowed to increase its charge bill or its expenditure by more than a stated percentage. In the early 1980s we crawled over this obvious idea, but rejected it.

To cap or control, central government has to choose figures so far above the average that only a limited number of extreme cases are caught. And those below the cap have an implied licence to spend up to it. To extend the cap by lowering its incidence increases the risk of legal challenge. And to design such a system effectively would negate accountability and be an act of centralized political power outside our experience. On these grounds alone it should be resisted.

This brings me to the single biggest change I believe the Government should introduce. Only one factor consistently presses

down on local government expenditure: the fear of electoral defeat. Historically, in election years the rates were held down, while in other years balances built up and expenditure increased.

Local authorities should be free to set and account for their own budgets. What I propose is that, if those budgets exceed by a given percentage the Government's calculations of the sum needed to provide a proper service, an election for the whole council must be held on the issue. I narrowly failed to persuade the Cabinet to adopt this proposal in 1981. I still believe it would work. It would impose a powerful financial discipline because few councillors would want to risk it; certainly not year after year.

It would be possible to tighten the disciplines further and build in an extra disincentive by imposing a surcharge. A local authority proposing a high community charge would have to hand over a surcharge to the Treasury to compensate for inflationary consequences. The surcharge could rise as excess expenditure rose.

The scales could be weighted against the excess spenders, without removing all their discretion. Local authorities would retain

discretion, and it would be their electorate, not central government, which capped them, without having to wait years to do so.

On to two specific problems. Within the present safety-net provisions, an accident is waiting to happen. Next year the Treasury is to assume responsibility for paying up to £75 per adult on behalf of those councils which this year are contributing to the safety net. But in those authorities with no elections next year there is little incentive to pass on to charge-payers the equivalent of this sum.

On the other hand, other authorities will lose support and will blame the Government. There should be no withdrawal of safety-net support next year. The transitional relief scheme, by which those who were paying a low domestic rate are protected from steep rises in community charge, must be improved and expanded, and must be calculated with greater reference to actual charges and not notional figures of assumed spending.

There are then a number of relatively cheap, but politically expensive, sources of grievance. Tacking the elderly because they remain at home, looked after by their families — when transfer to

old people's homes, thereby increasing public expenditure, would save them personally around £350 a year — seems to me a negation of Tory principles. The deemed assumption by the Government that savings can earn more than 20 per cent is, frankly, incredible. And we have gained the maximum political opprobrium by charging the physically disabled, student nurses and students themselves, with precious little extra revenue to show for it.

There are harsh anomalies following the death of a house-owner. Surely compassion must spare relatives — the immediate arrival of a bill for two poll taxes, days after a loved one dies. Local authorities' discretion to charge up to double the community charge in this — and quite a number of other situations — should be restricted. The double burden of community charge and unified business rate on the small businessman living above the shop is unacceptable.

Funding next year's grant settlement will present the Government with its most difficult decision. The settlement itself must be based on realistic economic assumptions. It must also involve a determined adjustment of the standard spending assessments to reflect reality in a wider range of authorities. My instinct is for a realistic settlement, relying on my election proposal to keep the charge down. But realism is not just about local government; it is about the economy at large. The natives may be restless in the constituencies, but the gnomes in Zurich are not doing either.

Finally, I come to the most

controversial aspect of the community charge. The original manifesto commitment said: "We shall abolish the domestic rating system and replace it by taxes more broadly based and related to people's ability to pay." Initially the community charge adopted a flat-rate principle for all, but that has long since been abandoned in the face of political reality. I believe that to honour our original pledge, to appeal to the national sense of fairness and to finance in part the changes I have outlined, the better-off members of the community should pay more.

Banding upwards can in practice, in the short term, only be based on income. There are no insurmountable obstacles, although there will be crudities and criticisms however this is achieved. But these will be criticisms from those who have prospered mightily under this Government. The new arrangements for the community charge would become more acceptable generally and the Labour Party's pledge to abolish it every day less credible. The Government should instruct its civil servants to work up proposals based on the assumption that everyone will pay something, but that the significantly better-off, by which I mean top-rate taxpayers, will contribute more.

Properly run, local government can be a source of alternative political power, a focal point for civic pride and a sensitive means of involving and serving the people. Central government does not always know best and certainly has no monopoly of prudent administration. But it pays most of the bills and, therefore, there has to be a partnership of power.

Bernard Levin sees the Campbell case as reason for a new look at the libel laws

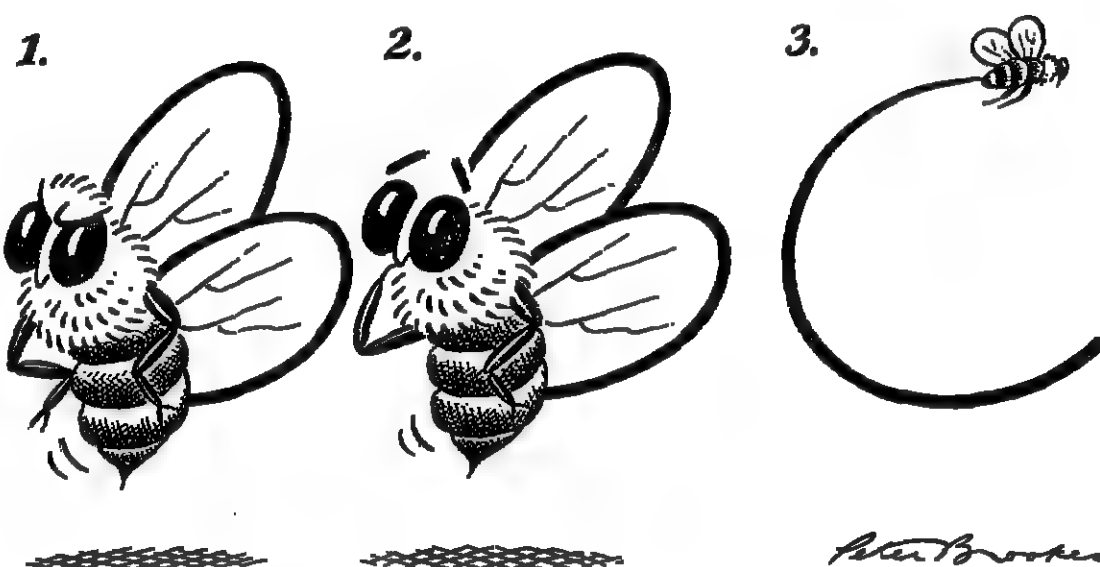
Faction with a sting in the tale

Is everybody mad but me? I ask the question in the wake of the Duncan Campbell libel action, settled last week by the BBC on payment of £30,000 in damages and another £50,000 or so in legal costs (oh, in my next life I am going to be a lawyer, oh yes I am, I tell you). The BBC had originally offered £5,000; were I the man who runs the BBC (which, thank the Lord, I'm not, Sir), rather than sticking a nought on the end and giving in, I would have reduced the offer to a crumpled tenner and fought the thing from here to eternity.

Before I argue my claim, there are some obvious things to be said, though in truth they are so obvious that I really should not waste time on them. First, of course, Mr Campbell is not a transvestite, he is not a fetishist, he is not a compulsive shoplifter, and he is not a journalist so negligent in his work that people who trust him find themselves betrayed.

I must pause here to point out that on the first two items he should have been non-suited anyway; it is not a crime to be a transvestite or a fetishist, nor is it something so revolting that no decent person could associate with one who practised such arcane pleasures even if he didn't do it in the street and frighten the horses; anyway, the question does not arise, because he wasn't either, let alone both. Nor, I repeat, was he guilty of the two real charges — thieving from shops and shopping his informants.

These things, though, were attributed in a play screened by the BBC to a character called "David Dunhill". (The paucity of imagination shown by the BBC's drama department can give you a hiccups; anyone but that lot would at least have had the sense to name the character Lorimer Dashboard, Fontwater or Karl Dobermann-Pinscher or even Roy Hattersley.) David Dunhill, in the play, was an investigative journalist specializing in the exposure of military fiddles (British ones, of course).



which is much the same as what Campbell does for a living. There was an announcement attached to the broadcast, making clear that what was to follow was fiction, but the similarity of name, trade, professional experience and, it seems, even appearance, could hardly have been entirely coincidental, and when criminal behaviour was added to the portrait of the character, it added up to defamation, whereupon Mr Campbell sued.

Let us jump forward, at this point, to Mr Campbell's solicitor making his statement in court after the case had been settled. In such pleas the rule is to lay it on thick, but I do feel that the bilge content in this instance was enough to drown everybody in sight from the Law Courts to the far end of the Strand. Here, after all, is a journalist with many a real scoop to his name, who has tumbled not only with bureaucracy but the law, who is as dogged in his pursuit of his professional quarry as any mole, who has had the Special Branch raiding his home, who has been threatened and ignored the threats, and who has even fallen off his bicycle and

bashed his face rather badly, yet carried on; and it is of this man that the following is said: "... the central character was taken by a number of viewers to be a representation of Mr Campbell's personal and professional life", and "... the film caused profound distress and professional embarrassment to Campbell..."

I used the word bilge; was it too strong? For who is this shrinking flower weeping into his pillow night after night with the distress — nay, the profound distress — and professional embarrassment that the film has caused him? Why, who but Mr Duncan Campbell, the Terror of the MoD, the Bane of Thatcher, the Man with his Eye to a Thousand Keyholes, whose life has been ruined (or will be if he doesn't get a gigantic pile of pondulicids to dry his tears on) by being portrayed "with only a cat and a domineering mother for company".

Look, mate. You were only supposed to have a domineering mother; let me tell you that I did have, and not in a play, a Jewish mother, and to this day, if I drink a cup of hot tea just before leaving the house I still put my hand over

mouth, in case I catch cold. Beat that, nobby-pammy. (As for the cat, I have 17, but they are made of wood, stone or cloth, and I live alone quite happily. You can borrow some of my CDs if it will make you feel better.)

Bilge I said, and bilge I meant. "A number of viewers" took the fictional character for the real one; what was the exact number? He suffered "profound distress"; what was the exact profundity, measured by official Navy sonar, of the said distress? He was caused "professional embarrassment"; exactly how many of his colleagues, employers, sources and editors, having seen the film, instantly took to crossing the road whenever they saw him coming?

Mr Campbell was libelled; he does not steal, nor does he put his informants at risk, nor does he dress in frilly knickers, nor is his mother domineering, nor is his cat his only friend, etc, etc. But why does it follow, as it apparently does, that a man who has been libelled seriously, let alone as trivially as in this case, must necessarily sue? I have been libelled scores of times, but not once have I even considered suing,

though fifty thou would nestle in my pocket as warmly as in Mr Campbell's.

And the BBC caved in! How is the present madness in the libel courts, where any plaintiff has an odds-on chance of massive damages, however absurd his case, to be ended if an organization like the BBC, having sensibly offered £5,000 in settlement, goes mad and agrees to the figure being multiplied by 10?

As it happens, there is an answer to that question. From time to time, there have been suggestions that the law of slander should be brought into line with the law of libel; the crucial difference between them is (with a few exceptions) that in libel, damage is proved, but in slander actual damage must be shown. A.P. Herbert, I recall, frequently argued the case for the equality of slander, saying that it was absurd that words written on a postcard were more dangerous than words shouted from the house-tops.

I think that for once A.P. got things the wrong way round. Surely, what we need is a libel law which demands the same admirable test as slander does now. Had such a law existed when Mr Campbell was defamed, he would have had to prove that, say, friends ceased to see him and commissions dried up. It may well be that he could have proved as much, but the Flight of the Bumble-BBC made it impossible to discover what exactly were the results of the film for him. If he could have shown damage, he would have been entitled to monetary compensation; my own feeling is that journalists ought not to sue anyway, and I go further and say that a successful plaintiff ought to have his costs and a publicly-promulgated statement of the outcome of the action, but not damages. Does anybody remember the jingle of my childhood, which went "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names can never hurt me"?

...and moreover

CLEMENT FREUD

The queue of traffic waiting to turn left from the Faro airport approach road was seriously long and, as the right-hand lane was clear, I drove my Avis hire-car past a hundred stationary vehicles, turned east on the highway and some 500 metres on, with no traffic behind or in front, executed a U-turn. Passing the Aeroporuto sign on the other side of the road, it was reassuring to note that the line of cars had barely diminished, and I chortled as I accelerated westward in the direction of Sagres. The sun shone from a cloudless sky; had there been birds in the hedgerows, they would surely have sung, for it was the bank holiday weekend.

A few minutes later, I was overtaken by a policeman on a motorbike, who waved his arm in a manner which persuaded me to stop. I had not been watching the speedometer and my seatbelt was unfastened; he wore a uniform, looked angrily at me, and he peered suspiciously at the car.

He said: "Driving licence," the policeman said. I had left my driving licence on the bedside table in Wimpole Street earlier that morning, though fortunately Avis, from whom I have hired before, had a record of the number. Explanations of this predicament would have stretched my Portuguese, so I delivered in my bag and brought out passport, British Caledonian charter ticket, vehicle rental agreement, senior citizen's rail pass, MCC membership card for 1990 (which is about driver's licence size, though more dramatic in colour), and the Memorandum and Articles of Association of a country house hotel in the West Country which is looking for investment under the Business Expansion Scheme. He examined the documents carefully and said it would cost 8,000 escudos. I replied that it was a

pleasure doing business with him, explained that at a rate of exchange of 250 to the £1, I made it £32, which sum I produced. He looked at the notes with as much enthusiasm as he had accorded the MCC card, grubbed in his motorbike bag and took from its depths a copy of *Correio de Manhã*, a national tabloid, which he opened at the inside back page, looking over his shoulder, I noted that on the international weather table London had been warmer than Lisbon — and remarked thereon, pleasantly.

He grunted and turned a page. Benfica had won at home. I tried to translate "Two, Four, Six, Eight, How do we appreciate, B.E.N.F.I.C.A." He let it pass, along with most of the cars that had been in the queue at the traffic lights. He turned another page, "Industrial dispute by Iberian ground control staff". I told him how it had been at Gatwick, the noise, the people, the delays — and he peered unenthusiastically at the £10 notes I had thrust into his hand while continuing to search the pages of his newspaper for the sterling-escudo exchange rate.

Around that time, I remembered that I had some Portuguese money in the back pocket of my holiday trousers, found a sufficiency thereof and put it into his hand. He gave me back my sterling, passport, ticket, rail pass, MCC card, BES prospectus and, after some thought, tore a page from the Avis car rental agreement. A second policeman arrived on a motorbike, possibly to deter me from violence.

I asked if I might go now. He nodded. I got into my car, started the engine, stopped it, got out, went up to the policeman and said: "Now that it is all over, tell me what I did wrong." He said he had seen me do a U-turn on the main road near the Aeroporuto traffic lights.

I thought of explaining the legality of such a manoeuvre, considered reminding him that his country and mine were the oldest allies in Europe, toyed with asking for my money back, decided to let this be a lesson to me and muttered: "I understand."

He said "Bom dia". So I said: "Driving licence."

Ghost with a past

Fresh controversy seems certain to break out around the released Guildford Four with two of them due to publish autobiographies soon. Gerard Conlan's story is being ghosted by *Guardian* journalist David Fallister, and has already led to ructions on the paper over its own coverage of the case. Paul Hill's autobiography, *Stolen Years: Before and After Guildford*, is being rushed out at the beginning of July, and is described by Doubleday, the publisher, as a "well-written, wonderful human interest story". Hill's co-writer, Ronan Bennett, is no stranger to controversy. Three years ago, on the advice of the security services, the Speaker withdrew his House of Commons pass, issued by Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn, when it was revealed that in 1975 Bennett had been convicted of murdering a Northern Ireland police officer and sentenced to life imprisonment, though the conviction was overturned on appeal.

Later, Bennett admitted to working as a full-time member of the Anarchist movement in Britain, but he insisted yesterday: "My own politics are irrelevant. The book is written solely in Paul's voice." His personal experience of prison, police interrogation and a major trial enhanced his qualifications to write the book, he says. "People cannot understand how someone can make a false confession to something they did not do. I can."

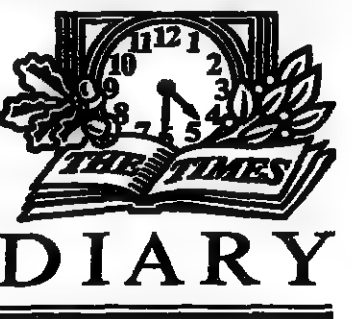
Will the book exhibit Republican, or even IRA sympathies? "It

will reflect the views common to anyone who grew up in Belfast at the time of internment," says Bennett. It will also urge the release of the Birmingham Six, whose conviction he describes as "another failure of the system of criminal justice". Whether their chances of release will be improved by having their cause taken up in so controversial a book remains to be seen.

Another name to add to the list here yesterday of prominent people of Lithuanian descent, Joe Slovo, leading light of the ANC and South African Communist party leader, was actually born there — which probably makes him the only Lithuanian who still enthusiastically embraces the party line.

Apprenticeship

Advisers to two potential contenders for the Tory leadership have been locked in battle for nomination for the safe seat of Devesh — with the fate of the winner possibly in the hands of two former Labour MPs. Kenneth Keswick, special adviser to Kenneth Clarke, the Health Secretary, and Patrick Rock, adviser to Chris Patten at the Environment Department, were among the 300 hopefuls who applied for the vacancy created by Sir Charles Morrison's decision to stand down at the next election. Both made the shortlist of 20, but Rock has failed to make it to the last eight. Keswick, a leading figure behind-the-scenes in the reform of the health service, now faces tough opposition from John Horam, formerly Labour MP for Gateshead West, whose political odyssey took him to the SDP in



1981 before switching to the Tories three years ago. He has ministerial experience, is well fancied — and must at least have the sympathy, if not the support, of the chairman of the Devesh Conservative Association selection panel. He is none other than Sir Reg Prentice, the former Labour cabinet minister who crossed the floor of the House in 1977, was rewarded with a safe Conservative seat in the 1979 general election and made a minister in Mrs Thatcher's first government.

Noises off

A silent film of *Der Rosenkavalier* made in 1926, complete with sand-wich-board translations of German subtitles and an accompanying live performance, may sound like something from the wilder fringes of the Edinburgh Festival, but just such a multimedia extravaganza will be seen at the Festival Hall this month. The film of Richard Strauss's opera, not seen since its British premiere 64 years ago because of the composer's disapproval, will be screened as part of the Music

for Life day organized by the Aids charity, Cruisaid. When the film first appeared, Strauss himself conducted the accompanying orchestra and singers before disowning it. The City of

It should fit in with the noisy paintings.



Birmingham Touring Opera will provide the Festival Hall soundtrack, and in a bizarre variation of the Royal Opera's controversial procedure, opera critics will hold aloft placards bearing English translations of the film's German subtitles.

Portillo priority

Michael Portillo, who has just landed the thankless task of selling the poll tax to a reluctant electorate, has made his first task selling its virtues to his fellow Tory MPs. Virtually all other engagements have been cancelled while he undertakes a series of what an aide described yesterday as "endless meetings" with his own backbenchers, whose anxieties about their future have not been relieved by the results of last week's local government elections. The move is interpreted at Westminster as a sign of how seriously the leadership has taken

warnings not to assume that the worst is over on the poll tax. Portillo's appointment, working under Chris Patten's wing, is the latest in a string of coincidences. He joined Patten at the Conservative Research Department on May 3, 1976, began work for the Prime Minister on May 3, 1979, and was formally told of his latest job on May 3, 1990.

A sleuth rewarded

Norman Sherry, author of that exhaustive biography of Graham Greene, has, like his subject, been awarded an Edgar by the Mystery Writers of America Inc. It recognizes not so much his mastery of the whodunnit but how dunnit: his single-minded shadowing of Greene's far-flung wanderings over a period of 20 years — to West Africa, the Americas, the Congo, Vietnam, and, of course, Brighton. Sherry describes the settings of Greene's novels and to record his every action of any significance (and some, it must be confessed, of none). The award, in the form of a bust of Edgar Allan Poe, the guiding spirit of the MWA, has surprised the British-born author, who now lives in Texas. "I have never regarded myself as a mystery writer," he said yesterday. But his odyssey was replete with mystery, as he concedes in the preface to his book. Greene, he wrote, "is noted for his determination to protect his privacy and keep secret what he wishes to keep secret". Indeed, when Sherry asked Greene for a map of his journeys, the author duly complied — but added the note: "You are my biographer, you date my journeys."



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A PROFESSION AT BAY

It is a great pity that the big teaching unions should have run up such a deficit in public sympathy over the past decade. They fought the Tory reforms — parent power, opting out, the National Curriculum — every inch of the way, and shattered their standing in the community by breaking the unwritten code of professional people: thou shalt not strike. Their strikes seemed to be incessant, and were called for purposes which few parents understood, let alone supported. If recruiting new teachers is now a Sisyphean task, the culture of gloomy self-pity which unions have sustained in the staff-rooms bears much of the blame.

This all-pervading sulkiness has allowed society and the Government to underestimate the case for a better-paid profession in the 1990s — which teachers themselves might have been making, had their advocates possessed the wit to do so. A further indictment of these unions, and of their surrogates on the Labour front bench, is the fact that the first intellectually persuasive case for a large injection of public money should have come from a Tory-dominated education select committee, in yesterday's report on the supply of teachers for the 1990s.

The committee must have taken a deep breath before presenting its "substantial" bill to the Treasury, at a time when inflation is still rising and growth this year is expected to have fallen back to little more than 1 per cent. Teachers' pay has not been squeezed since the abolition of the Burnham negotiating system. All demands for treatment as a special case will rightly be subjected to sceptical scrutiny by the Cabinet's "star chamber".

Instead of ignoring the requirements of fiscal prudence, the report wants the State to boost resources to achieve several specific, limited and attainable ends. The committee wants salaries to be weighted to reflect house prices, in order to take account of the reasonable expectations of teachers in a property-owning society. Since teacher shortages are most severe in the South-east, the allowances paid to teachers in this region will only achieve their aim of attracting the disillusioned back into the profession if they make it possible to finance a

mortgage on a family house or flat. With high interest rates, this is hard for young married teachers in London and the Home Counties.

MPs are also right to recommend further targeting of so-called "shortage subjects". True, the Government has already introduced several schemes with this aim in mind — in the teeth of union opposition. But it has hitherto failed to offer enough cash to make them effective. This must be remedied soon, as the number of subjects which are short of recruits is growing. There is much to be said, too, for another proposal: that needy teachers in mid-career who want to stay in the classroom should not be forced into administration.

The committee calls for a new national negotiating machinery to be in place by March 1991. This is unavoidable. Central government, having provided most of the money with which local education authorities pay their teachers, is unwilling to give the LEAs a free rein; and the unions' institutional hostility to local bargaining is insuperable.

Yet Mr MacGregor, the Education Secretary, has already proposed that individual LEAs, like grant-maintained schools, should have the option of reaching a settlement with their local unions, within an overall budget, regardless of the new "son of Burnham". This is a rare phenomenon in public administration: a chance for local government to show that it can do better than Whitehall. The select committee may have felt that the devolution of responsibility for teachers' pay was outside its brief, but it should address this in its next report.

Even if the Government were to adopt all these proposals it cannot give the teachers back their professional self-esteem. That they must do for themselves. The proposed General Teaching Council, backed by the committee as a counterpart to other professional bodies, might help to foster a new self-confidence. Special training in classroom discipline — perhaps by seconding experienced "sergeant-majors" from good schools to the training colleges — would also help to restore morale. Teaching has never been a lucrative profession; it should always be a rewarding one.

PURSE MY LIPS

The budgetary ritual currently being played out in Washington between the Administration and the Congress is reminiscent both of a minuet and of a game of poker. "Read my lips": Mr Bush intoned the phrase a thousand times as he rode the electoral trail in 1988. The message — "no new taxes" — was an alluring one, and audiences all over the United States shouted it back at him like children at a pantomime. The routine was of decisive importance in his victory over the Democrats, who remained anchored stubbornly in the public mind as the party of tax increases.

That was all of two years ago. The budget deficit has not gone away. The April employment figures were bad. Interest rates have continued to rise and economic growth remains sluggish. If matters do not improve dramatically by the autumn, the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings budget-balancing Act will be triggered and there will be automatic cuts. The President's budget director, Mr Richard Darman, says they could be of the order of \$100 billion.

This is a prospect as unappealing to congressmen as it is to the President. The impact on defence would be twice as severe as that of the measures currently approved by the House, and the effect would be equally unattractive to those whose interest lies in social spending. Mr Bush, full of sweet reason, invited four key congressional leaders to meet him at the weekend "to sit down and talk process". The two Democrats who attended, the Senate majority leader and the House Speaker, did so in the spirit in which a couple of streetwise flies might walk into the spider's parlour.

Mr Bush has an eye not solely to the spectre of Gramm-Rudman. The congressional elections are only a few months away, and there is just a chance that the Republicans might regain control of the Senate. If that prospect is to remain a realistic one, the present exceptional popularity of the President in the opinion polls must not be jeopardized. In a longer perspective,

there is Mr Bush's drive for a second term in 1992. An economy pushed into recession by sustained high interest rates is not at all what Republican strategists are looking for.

That is why it is now being put about that Mr Bush seeks a negotiation "unfettered" by past positions, including his own. The readability of the President's lips, it seems, carried only a 12-month guarantee. After that, what had been a pledge was transmuted into "a goal". The White House spokesman has said that the President would impose no preconditions on budget discussions. If, with his new readiness to discuss tax increases, he can entice the Democrats into some sort of budget deal now, the greater the chance of avoiding an embarrassing debate over taxes as the congressional election campaign heats up.

"George Bush is the oldest pro in the village", said a senior Republican Senator this week in a succinct explanation of why a particular tax — income tax — was the only one excluded from the long list of revenue increases now "in the mix". As an old oil man, the President might also jibe at the idea of a federal tax on petrol, but value-added taxes, a national lottery, taxes on cigarettes and alcohol and a one-cent national sales tax all seem to have been passed in review.

Apart from his desire to see a budget that will maintain economic growth and an agreement with Congress on a long-term programme to reduce the deficit, the President still harbours two ambitions that eluded his predecessor: a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, and the power to veto individual items in a spending bill without causing the rejection of the entire measure. They must both wait a little longer. For the moment Mr Bush and his opponents will continue to divide their attention in roughly equal proportions between the nation's most intractable fiscal problem and the watching of their own backs. The President is taking a risk. He is to be commended for doing so.

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

The audience at Covent Garden in 1809 was so upset by the rising price of seats that it held up the drama on stage for two whole months. No such fate seems likely to overtake *Il trovatore*, whose audience sounded in better voice than the leading tenor on Monday night. But the link between prices and protest remains pertinent.

In this country people usually boo productions — in contrast to Italy, where they concentrate on the cast. Last September the English National Opera at the Coliseum received what is politely called the bird when it set Verdi's *Masked Ball* in the 1920s (Verdi seems to be going through rather a bad patch). Two months later the Royal Opera House also provoked a mixed reaction with *Medea*, a Greek tragedy which it transposed to revolutionary France as part of the bicentennial celebrations.

One reason why the booing there last Monday attracted such attention in the press was that it was occasioned by a singer. Signor Walter Donati, who was playing the leading role, was said to be suffering from an infection of the throat, which must be like a ballet dancer getting through *Giselle* with a twisted ankle. Apparently the producer caught the worst of it, being catcalled at the end of the performance. But that might have been because Signor Donati had left for what in Rugby League is called an early bath.

One should feel some sympathy with the disadvantaged. Donati started the evening in reasonable voice and struggled manfully to the interval. He deteriorated in the second half, however, by which time it was too late to replace him. Arguably he should have been

cheered, not derided, for battling on through the pain barrier to the end. Booing is an obnoxious form of protest. Not only must it unsettle the suffering singer but it impinges on one's neighbours in the stalls, some of whom might actually be relishing the performance.

Opera singers, however, still escape fairly lightly. The barracking of slow-scoring opening batmen, the taunts hurled at back-peddalling battered boxers, the missiles thrown at butterflyed goalkeepers... Admittedly it is difficult to recall a string quartet being excoriated *in situ* — and with a pop group it is rather hard to tell. The days when the police feel obliged to advise Covent Garden to change the date of its forthcoming Wagner fixture are still happily distant.

Audience reaction probably helps. No seat will be left unfilled at Covent Garden when *Il trovatore* returns tomorrow night. Peter O'Toole's intriguing version of *Macbeth* received more laughs on its first night than *Charley's Aunt*, but never looked back in terms of public interest. Theatres need lively audiences, not just live ones.

The main justification for booing must, however, rest with the rights of the average theatregoer. Seats at the Royal Opera House on Monday cost up to £82 apiece. Such prices were moreover being charged by a company which enjoys a 40 per cent subsidy from the taxpayer. Someone who has thus paid twice to see the best might feel aggrieved if the best is not delivered. However hard life may have seemed for poor Signor Donati, those who had paid to listen to a man with laryngitis might also feel they had a legitimate complaint. Audiences need to protest *fortissimo* at times.

Police priorities and public needs

From the Chairman of the Police Federation

Sir, Your leading article, "Confidence in the police" (May 3), was a refreshing change from some of the near-to-hysterical comments about police complaints and public confidence that have appeared in other papers recently.

You are quite right to draw attention to the most significant finding of the Operational Policing Review — that the public want a visible, preventive role for the police in the community, while police priorities put the arrest of criminals and the detection of crime ahead of community policing. We have to accept that there is a need for fresh thinking and new understanding.

It will not be easy. The public expects criminals to be caught and the police are under constant attack for low detection rates. You yourself refer to public demand for results, even if these can be achieved only by shortcuts.

The canteen culture of which you speak is not wholly destructive — it even instils a pride in belonging to the uniform that is wholly good; where it goes wrong is on those rare occasions when misguided loyalty to colleagues transcends obligation to the service. This is where good first-line management is so essential, yet now we have the majority of sergeants station-bound as cus-

tody officers, and inspectors weighed down with administrative duties.

The Police Federation rejects the concept of an "officer class", not because we fear a return to the ill-starred Trenchard scheme. We believe that the service contains more than enough in all ranks to provide first-class management and leadership now and in the future. What concerns us is that there are too many officers who are encouraged from an early age to pursue promotion for its own sake and as an end in itself. They are not giving the service leadership and it is this problem that must be addressed with some urgency.

The Operational Policing Review was the combined effort of all the service associations. It was undertaken in the interests of both the police and the public. There is no shortage of good will in the service to make the police more efficient and fully accountable. There is, however, some reason to doubt the good intentions of others who proclaim that we are suffering from terminal institutional rot.

Yours sincerely,
A. EASTWOOD, Chairman,
Police Federation,
15-17 Langley Road,
Surrey, Surrey,
May 4.

Helping hostages

From Mr M. B. Eaden

Sir, Your leader today (early editions) rightly stresses that governments in "hostage situations" are dreadfully vulnerable. But neither your leader nor recent British Government statements have spelt out the real reason for not dealing with terrorists.

Because of our history there are more groups of people throughout the world with real or imagined grievances against Britain than against any other nation. Our people, moreover, travel widely on business or pleasure. If ever the idea should gain credence that the British Government might in any circumstances be prepared to negotiate for the release of a hostage, British people would be at risk in many regions.

As a very visible British representative abroad, I was constantly thankful to have a Government which would not negotiate for my release if I were taken, knowing that this policy gave the best possible guarantee that it would not happen. I believe that the great majority of British business residents and travellers abroad shared and share this view.

Yours faithfully,
M. B. EADEN
(HM Consul General,
Karachi and
Amsterdam, 1975-82),
New Houses,
Cuckington, nr Wincanton,
Somerset,
May 4.

War horses

From Mr E. Windham-Bellord

Sir, The late Sir Harry Smith, when Governor of the Cape in the middle of the last century, had one town named after himself, Harrysmith, one after his Spanish wife, Ladysmith, and one after his charger, Alwal. That the animal had been named, in its turn, for Sir Harry's famous victory in 1846 in the Sikh campaign, before accompanying him to the Cape, does not, I think, lessen the uniqueness of a town being named for a horse, rather than the other way round.

It is still there, now called Alwal North.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
EDWARD WINDHAM-BELLORD,
The Cottage,
Cuckington, nr Wincanton,
Somerset,
May 8.

'Vegetarian' speech

From Mr A. G. Gordon

Sir, Your letters (May 4, 7) on Mr John Gummer's "vegetarian" speech have been almost as entertaining as the speech itself but some have surely been slightly unfair.

My impression on hearing him was that he, as Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, would vigorously defend anyone's right to decide whether or not to be a vegetarian.

What he did attack was the attempt by food faddists and anti-meat lobbyists to impose their will on other people, as some are now trying to do in our schools.

Freedom of choice, which we all value so highly, must depend on an unfettered choice being there in the first place. Brussels sprouts or Brussels sprouts? Personally, I

prefer roast beef and Brussels sprouts.

Yours faithfully,
A. G. GORDON
(Executive Director,
International Meat Trade
Association,
217 Central Markets, EC1).

From Mrs Margaret England

Sir, It has been said that we are to be caretakers of our world. Does Mr Gummer know that all the over-production of cattle has seriously contributed to the "greenhouse" gases?

Methane gas, CH₄, is the second greatest pollutant after CO₂. Each cow roughly produces 200 litres of methane a day!

Yours sincerely,
MAGGY ENGLAND
(Medical technologist),
22 Castle Gate,
Kirkbymoorside,
North Yorkshire.

Science and history

From Professor R. V. Jones, FRS

Sir, Major-General H. G. Woods (April 25) is concerned by the lack of attention in the report by the National Curriculum's history working group to the impact of technology on history. I conclude that the report also overlooks the associated impact of science.

Apart from distinguished exceptions, such as Herbert Butterfield and H. A. L. Fisher, historians (and, indeed, many scientists) have much undervalued the interaction of science and technology with history, despite all its fascination. An excellent case for study at school, and especially in Britain, is the development and application

of the steam engine, of which Fisher wrote

A small handful of remarkable Scots and Englishmen, fewer than would be required for a football match, succeeded by their ingenuity in transforming the economic life of the country. No doubt they derived support and inspiration from the atmosphere of their age... Some of the inventors, notably James Watt, who first gave a decisive industrial value to the steam engine, were men of science. Yet more important than actual scientific training was the idea, which the Royal Society had so powerfully helped to spread, that

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

The Thatcher 'vision of Britain'

From Mr Frank Field, MP for Birkenhead (Labour)

Sir, Keith Joseph (May 7) writes that Mrs Thatcher's "vision is of a self-reliant British people with generous help to those who cannot help themselves but without encouraging dependency or a welfare culture".

The facts speak otherwise. Despite a rapid period of economic growth since 1981 the increase in the value of benefits for long-term claimants has risen at a much slower rate than was the case during the 1970s — a period of much more modest growth.

You also report (May 8) that the Government has had to revise its calculations on the increase in living standards for the poorest 10 per cent. Far from rising faster than any other decile group, their increase in real living standards is less than the average income for the whole of the period.

Keith Joseph is similarly wrong about welfare dependency. The Government seems unable to grasp the inherent conflict in its policy between targeting help on those in most need (invariably by way of means test) and discouraging a welfare dependency. The numbers dependent on means-tested assistance have massively increased under this Government.

The numbers dependent on supplementary benefit/income support have almost doubled — up to around 7.5 million. The numbers claiming housing benefit have more than doubled — up to 8.6 million claimants in 1989.

The disincentive effect, or the welfare dependency, can be seen from a recent parliamentary answer (February 5, 1990). A married couple with two children earning £60 a week have a net

weekly income after claiming all the benefits to which they are entitled of £102.04. If the wage of the breadwinner increases to £170 a week, net weekly income will be £118.53. In other words, a £110-a-week increase on a wage of £60 leads to a net increase in weekly income of only £16.49.

I wish that what Keith Joseph has written was borne out by facts. Unfortunately it isn't.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK FIELD,
House of Commons,
May 8.

From Mr N. L. Cragoe

Sir, How can the "enterprise society" be said to have failed the poor when it has increased their living standards by 2.6 per cent?

Of course it would be better had it been the 8.4 per cent erroneously reported, but how nice for the whole population has gone up 5.4 per cent instead of 4.8 per cent as erroneously reported.

Yours truly,
N. L. CRAGOE
(Group Chief Executive),
Management & Business Studies,
50 Pall Mall, SW1,
May 8.

From Mr David Bailey

Sir, And the winner of the Understatement of the Year Award for 1990 is... Lord Joseph for his article in *The Times* on May 7.

Here we are, heading for double-digit inflation with record interest rates and a record balance of payments deficit.

"What a pity."
Yours sincerely,
DAVID BAILEY,
29 Elgin Crescent, W11.

Sale of the 'Graces'

From Mr George J. Levy

Sir, The arbitrary decision by Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (report, May 5), to allow private as well as public offers to be taken into account when considering export licence applications for works of art of heritage value may possibly have achieved keeping Canova's "The Three Graces" on public view at the Victoria and Albert Museum for the time being. So far so good.

But now, having changed the rules, it is apparently not at all certain that the present owners will agree to sell the Canova privately to Mr David and Mr Frederick Barclay. Not surprisingly, this confused situation has given little comfort to heritage groups in this country and it has also justifiably angered the Getty Museum in California to whom the sculpture had been sold.

London phone codes

From Mrs U. Banerjee

Sir, Your correspondent Eric Thompson (May 7) puts his finger on the very reason for the London telephone code change when he points out that published lists have grown even longer since first issued in April, 1989.

Each list had more exchanges than before as new exchanges were introduced to meet increased customer demand. That finite resource is now almost exhausted and the current look-up tables are definitive.

The 071/081 scheme doubles capacity, ensuring a sufficient volume of numbers both for new and existing customers who want to make extra use of services, such as direct dialling or facsimile.

Yours sincerely,
MILLIE BANERJEE
(District General Manager),
British Telecom London
Networks Organisation,
Connect House,
131 Alexandra Road, SW19.
May 7.

English in India

From Mr Reginald Massey

Sir, As a former student and lecturer at St John's College in Agra, I was deeply disturbed to read Christopher Thomas's report (May 1) of the Hindi assault on the use of English in the convents and Christian colleges of Uttar Pradesh.

Advanced nations such as the Japanese are making determined efforts to learn and cultivate English, and Indian extremists are doing their utmost to destroy it. Fanaticism has no logic, and evil triumphs when the just will not stand up and be counted.

The souls of Gandhi and the fathers of the Indian Constitution must be most tortured at this hour.

Yours faithfully,
REGINALD MASSEY,
Bryndu Canal,
Tydnor,
Llanidloes, Powys.
May 2.

knowledge was a growing thing, and that by observation and experiment new truths could be brought to light.

Historians might well reflect that their own studies have for centuries been aided by the invention of printing, while the admirable programmes of the Open University have only become possible through the invention of television.

If our coming generations are to have a better understanding of the profound impact of science and technology on their lives, both for good and for ill, then the history curriculum is the best channel through which to introduce them.

Yours faithfully,
R. V. JONES,
8 Queen's Terrace,
Aberdeen.

Mr Ridley's short-term solution, in an attempt to retain certain parts of our national heritage (for 25 years, in the case of the Canova) by allowing a private purchase without transfer of title to a public institution, is merely passing the buck to the next generation.

It also completely negates the entire system of export control set up in 1953 under the Waverley criteria. Even at this late stage the master could be helped if the Government were to take the advice of former Arts Minister, Lord St John of Fawley, when he said (Parliament, May 3) that "many in the art world would accept the intervention of private funding... if there were to be access (for) the public in perpetuity and a permanent export ban".

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE J. LEVY,
H. Blairman & Sons Ltd.,
119 Mount Street, W1,
May 5.

Baby alarms

From Mr A. J. Melsom

Sir, May I comment on your feature on baby alarms (Medical briefing, May 3)? Parents should be sure to see a distinction between the indiscriminate distribution of apnoea monitors to concerned parents, who may or may not have suffered a cot death, and the guidance and considered advice given by The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths, who are a major funder of research into cot death.

An apnoea monitor tells you when breathing stops. The blood oxygen monitor, to which you refer, has the capacity to anticipate an "event", and gives parents more time to react.

While participating in trials and research with a blood oxygen monitor, my wife and I have been greatly impressed and reassured by the machine (still about as complicated as a video to operate). As we return our monitor to the hospital today, perhaps other parents who have suffered this cruel manner of bereavement can be encouraged by the superb technological advances being made in the care of subsequent children.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW MELSOM,
South House, Ham,
Nr Marlborough, Wiltshire.
May 3.

Due difficulty

From Mr John Ferris

Sir, Mrs Norma Osmond in her letter published today (May 3) subconsciously answers her own question on how to pay one's due nowadays.

The Lloyds Access card at 25p per week (£12 annual charge) or the Barclaycard at less than 16p per week (£8 annual charge) would appear to be an extremely economic insurance against the risk of losing — or having stolen — the sort of cash volumes which one would otherwise be obliged to carry to meet even normal expenditure.

The arguments about the morality or equity of such annual charges are entirely another matter since the convenience of the facilities offered by charge card companies are almost irreplaceable — as Mrs Osmond has discovered.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN FERRIS,
Holmdene, 346 London Road,
Appleton, Warrington, Cheshire.

Branches of surgery

From Dr G. E. Pinkerton

Sir, My son in California had a problem with his long-case clock. The man who came to repair it announced himself as the "Doc Doc".

Yours sincerely,
G. E. PINKERTON,
17 Church Lane, Upwood,
Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire.

ARTS

Wish-fulfilment is pretty simple

CINEMA

David Robinson

It is a week of Hollywood actors on show, in films that stand or fall by their performances. *Pretty Woman* (15, Warner West End, Cannon Haymarket) is an old story, out of *Cinderella* by Pygmalion, and so familiar that we can predict everything that will happen within the first 10 minutes, when a rich and handsome Prince Charming runs into a wait-like young prostitute on Hollywood Boulevard.

He only wants to ask the way, but he is too good a trick to pass up so easily. He moves her into his ritzy penthouse, pays her to be his escort and transforms her with a new wardrobe.

There are no surprises in what happens: the interest depends on how well the actors show it happening. Richard Gere—reviewed last week in a very different role as the crazed killer cop in *Internal Affairs*—has resumed his screen career as a much more resourceful and sympathetic actor. He is also a skilful partner, using his cool aristocratic *savoir-faire* and well-mannered ruthlessness to set off Julia Roberts's naive *joie de vivre*.

Roberts is a revelation. Often looking unconvincingly like her brother Eric—a highly intelligent actor who has rarely been well used in films—she has something

of the looks of Nastassja Kinski or Isabella Rossellini, but more vitality and range than either. She convincingly makes the transformation from underclass hooker to society lady. Her face is always registering the rapid passage of feelings: her most magical scene is the tart's first experience of opera, and her instinctive, tearful response to (what else) *La traviata*.

The story is mostly set in a hotel of the opulent grandeur that only Hollywood can today provide. There are some quite nasty asides to demonstrate that in American society, clothes make—or brutally break—the woman; and some sharp portraits (Hector Elizondo and Larry Miller) of the snobishness of hotel staff and shop owners, who are obsequious or insulting, as occasion demands.

Meryl Streep, abandoning phoney foreign accents and soulful airs, is revealed as a spirited, if not very varied comedienne in *She-Devil* (15, Odeon Leicester Square).

The change to the title of Fay Weldon's novel *The Lives and Loves of a She-Devil* reflects the way it has been reduced to a one-

joke comedy. Streep plays the predatory millionaire hack writer of soft-core romantic novels. The she-devil is Roseanne Barr, a plump lady who looks like an unfortunate sister of Elizabeth Taylor, and affects an assortment of horrible facial moles.

When Streep makes off with her philandering accountant husband (Ed Begley Jr), Barr displays the full fury of a woman scorned. With solemn, demonic dedication, she strips him of all he cherishes: home, children, career and, finally, liberty.

There is a vestige of Fay Weldon's feminist purpose in the film's reflections on unfaithful husbands, rapacious women and the unfair premiums placed on female looks, but mostly it is reduced to camp caricature comedy: a style which the director, Susan Seidelman, at least sustains consistently in the performances and the fantasy setting of the romance queen's seaside palace.

A creeping monotony in the action and the central performances is relieved by one or two funny supporting roles: Sylvia Miles as Streep's harried mother, weighing in with a cupboard full of skeletons; diminutive Linda Hunt as a fierce geriatric nurse, and a Martinez as a pouting gigolo house-boy.

The writers of film publicity slogans sometimes display admirable skill in catching the essence of a story. The posters for

likeable, and the film scores some effective points from the contrast of Martinez's modern Indian battling against the Third World conditions to which his people are condemned in modern America, and his romantic companion dreaming of bringing back the heroic days and the ghosts of old gods and warriors.

There is a sense, though, that a lot of the script has been mislaid somewhere en route, for some

characters and incidents are inequally explained. At the end, the mood switches disconcertingly, and perhaps desperately, from realism to extravagant action farce. The director is Jonathan Wacks, producer of *Repo Man*.

Walter Hill's Johnny Handsome (15, Prince Charles), adapted from a thriller by John Goddy, provides a well-fitting part for Mickey Rourke's style of subdued show-off. Johnny is a criminal and not at

all handsome: at the start of the film the make-up department has transformed him into an Elephant Man look-alike, with speech impaired by a cleft palate and hare-lip. He is imprisoned for armed robbery, and his cause is taken up by a surgeon, who transforms him into Mickey Rourke.

The writers of film publicity slogans sometimes display admirable skill in catching the essence of a story. The posters for

Meryl Streep: Spirited millionaire writer in *She-Devil*Ruthless, but well-mannered: Richard Gere in *Pretty Woman*

The handsome A Martinez (the "A" seems to be without a full-stop, the indefinite article rather than an initial) appears in a very different role to that of his *pigolo* in *She-Devil*, in *Powwow Highway* (15, Electric), a film of admirable intentions but rather uncertain execution. Scripted by Janet Heaney and Jean Stawarz from a novel by David Seale, it is a road film about present-day American Indians. A

Martinez plays a fiery activist opposing the efforts of a big mining company to cheat the tribespeople on a Cheyenne reservation out of their land.

The company and the federal police set out to silence him by framing his sister on a drugs charge, but he sets off to rescue her, taking to the road in a broken-down car in the company of a fat, simple-minded fellow-tribesman. Martinez and Gary Farmer are

this one say: "They changed his future—could they change his past?" It is a classic fatalistic film noir plot, with the urge for revenge irresistibly dragging the criminal-hero back to his past, despite the appearance of good angels.

The stock story is well suited to Walter Hill's special brand of neon-bued film noir pastiche and his choice of actors (Rourke, Ellen Barkin, Morgan Freeman, Lance Henriksen).

There are no surprises in *A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child* (15, Cannon Haymarket). The special effects are better than ever, and often imaginative in design; but the price of watching still further manifestations of the awful Freddy Krueger, and disentangling the dreams of the pretty youngsters of Elm Street is too high a price to pay for them. The director is Stephen Hopkins.

Jingoism's galaxy of junk

TELEVISION
Sheridan Morley

THE British have always been at their best in excavations and museums, and television from Sir Mortimer Wheeler onward was quick to realize the potential for creating archaeological and curatorial superstars.

Last night's schedules seemed unusually full of frustrated curators on the rampage. While for *An Architectural Alphabet of Britain* (BBC 2) Lucy Lambton excavated a now-defunct watch and clock shop in Leeds, Tariq Ali's *Rear Window* (Channel 4), an uneven replacement for *Signs*, gave itself over to an entire programme about the Pitt-Rivers Museum in Oxford.

The Pitt-Rivers is, in many ways, the perfect British museum. It is nearly impossible to find, being situated within another university museum and then closed for 22 hours every weekday and all day Sunday. Once you have found it open, the Pitt-Rivers turns out to be a kind of geographical junk shop, assembled by a Victorian colonialist general.

Castanets made of nuts, musical whips, shrunken heads, and the statue of a man with an octopus on his head and two fish down his trousers, were all lovingly, and one suspects usually forcibly, removed from their natural overseas habitats and taken to Oxford a century or so ago. This was in anticipation of the day when Sir David Attenborough and Barry Cudliffe would stand around enthusing about Australian Aboriginal baby-carriers and Tahitian wooden head-rests, apparently carved for unusually small heads.

One black schoolgirl managed to get the word "Kaffir" crossed off the general's old labels, on the grounds that it is insulting, though not perhaps as insulting as his requirement that all exhibit definitions should be kept brief because the working classes did not have much interest in reading.

The truth, as Penelope Lively noted, is that the Pitt-Rivers is not so much a museum as an attic, full of old family treasures which nobody really wants but somehow ought not to be thrown away.

Hoarding for patriotic reasons has also always been a curiously British obsession, as is the passion for turning unwanted household implements into something even more useless. Denied, since the ending of the Second World War, the opportunity of sending our old milk bottle-tops off in the post for recycling into aircraft carriers, we now carry large numbers of old empty bottles around the country in a perpetual search for something useful to do with them.

Dispatches, on Channel 4 last night, followed a Brighton housewife desperate to sort, squash, and otherwise rearrange her household rubbish as per Chris Patten's instructions at the last Tory Party Conference, where we were told to recycle at least half our waste. It soon became apparent that Patten himself is not exactly eager to receive several hundred thousand tin-cans at his office address. Perhaps we could send them to the Pitt-Rivers Museum, instead.

Ad men subtract from movie magic

Glossy advertising styles are taking the place of true cinematic values, says Geoff Brown

One aspect overlooked by *Washes White*, the BBC's fascinating, if exhausting, survey of British television advertising, was the contribution of the commercials-director. Watching the series, a viewer from Mars might suppose that these 30-second hymns to consumer culture were entirely the work of the advertising executives.

Not so: over the years, an army of grown men has earned a living consolidating the package of images, emotions and slogans designed to implant in our unconscious the burning desire to buy, buy, buy.

There is a specialized trade, paid the bills in between warrier work in features, television or the theatre. Students considering the stylistic relationship between Anderson's Ewbank work and *If...* would be bashing their heads against a brick wall.

Far better for them to study the influence on the cinema of Alan Parker's Bird's Eye beefburger saga, Hugh Hudson's Flat Strada blockbuster of 1979, or the Hovis chorales of Ridley Scott. For these younger directors, the advertising companies provided their chief livelihood. The skills they developed were shaped by the rigorous demands of their trade; once they began crossing over into features in the mid-Seventies, they had, for a time, no other skills to offer.

Commercials trained them to a high degree of technical sophistication. They could perform virtuoso tricks with camera lighting; they could cut their strips of celluloid into fiendishly ingenious patterns; and they knew the secrets of audience manipulation, of leading us up the garden path by the artful use of social stereotypes, visual symbols and emotional stimuli. They knew all the ways to make an immediate visual impact, preventing the viewer losing interest.

They were also masters of



Sixties advertising: Selling a product on the aura it bestows, rather than on price and function

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atmosphere, spinning dreams and conjuring lifestyles with clothes, decor and accoutrements.

For as David Puttnam—himself an important alumnus of commercials—observed during *Washes White*, it was only in the early days that advertisements tried selling products by stressing their precise function and price. From the early Sixties onwards, products have been mostly sold on the aura they bestow, whether sexual satisfaction (Cadbury's Milk Flake) or financial sobriety (American Express—"That'll do nicely").

Feature films, however, have traditionally required skills other than technical wizardry and a slick ability to crystallize mass aspirations. They need, for instance, a knack for developing characters, sustaining a long-term narrative or depicting events in subtle shades, not stark comic-strip contrasts. Such things are not in a commercials-director's blood.

They think in short, sharp bursts, and over-play their stylistic hands. Perhaps it was Alan Parker's *Midnight Express*, in 1978, that first showed the perils of a commercials-director barding his scenes with bawling dramatics and meretricious images (in this case shafts of sunlight slanting through the dank Turkish prison,

prettily catching the mould on the walls) with scant regard for suitability or overall effect.

Since then, the glossy, high-pitched advertising style has consolidated its position in entertainment cinema. Hugh Hudson's films grasp at the epic form but consistently crumble into advert-like cameos and fragments: the slow-motion runners of *Chariots of Fire* might have strayed from some commercial for sportswear.

Ridley Scott has made a Hollywood career out of hi-tech gloss hiding hollow material, while Adrian Lyne has carved a dubious niche selling sexual fears in *9½ Weeks* and *Fatal Attraction*.

Directors can mature, of course, and cast off old habits. But the worry for cinema is that none of the most prolific breeding grounds for tomorrow's feature directors (the music video industry is another) is equipped to develop the appropriate sensibility. Some of the best film passages ever made simply show two people quietly talking. But quiet talk is out of fashion among film-makers and audiences, who respond better to noise, frenzied optical effects and jazzy editing, and whose sole knowledge of cinema's past derives from those vintage black-and-white clips mischievously used to advertise lager.

It was Derek Ragin who sang the role originally written for Handel's notorious castrato, Senesino. The dancing brilliance of his love music and the tortured ambivalence expressed in every vocal nuance were a reminder that Britain far too seldom hears this most witty counter-tenor.

Lea Lottens, as Emilia, illuminated the evening's great Handelian Largo and much more beside; Jeffrey Gall brought a plummy counter-tenor to the pompous King Flavio himself; Gloria Banditelli, as his beloved Teodora, was a true contralto, loved by Christina Hogman's mezzo-lit *travesti* Virgè.

Luiz, harpsichord and violone robustly sculpted each recitative, while the Orchestra Concerto Köln caressed, teased and fought its way through love, intrigue and murder (the latter with a few bars' help from the pen of Jacobs himself). As one of the most entirely satisfying Handel productions of the past half century, this *Flavio* deserves to be as widely seen as it may now be heard.



Lea Lottens sings Emilia

Full, and focused

OPERA

Hilary Finch

Flavio
Salle Garnier,
Monte Carlo

IMAGINE the story of Romeo and Juliet, with its entire parental dossier tangled tiresomely into one of the more tedious episodes in the ancient history of the kings of Lombardy. That is Handel's *Flavio*, most irrational of all irrational entertainments, and currently and improbably, top of the French classical charts. In the still more improbable setting of Monte Carlo's Casino-opera House, it became clear why.

René Jacobs, who conducts both in Monaco and on disc,

RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERS UNITE!

Join thousands of pet owners who have registered their animals on the National Pet Register—an established animal identification scheme operated by a leading animal welfare charity to reunite lost pets with their owners.

Why? Because registration means greater security for both you and your pet through our 24 hour lost pet emergency phone service and third party insurance cover. But that's not all. You'll be helping to support an organisation whose aims are to minimise the heartbreaking destruction of stray and stolen problems caused by uncontrolled animals.

HOW DO I REGISTER MY PET? Simply fill in and return the application below, together with a cheque or postal order for £5.00.

Details of your pet will then be entered into our computer system—and you will be sent, by return, an engraved identification disc for your pet's collar, carrying our 24 hour emergency phone number.

*£5.00 fee for life-long registration for your pet, as well as third party insurance for one year (renewable annually)—£2.00.

Please send completed application to: National Pet Register, Church Hill Road, Heydon, Ely, Cambs CB6 2PA. Telephone: 0763 833329

NATIONAL PET REGISTER

I enclose £5.00 for registration of my pet on the National Pet Register. Please send identification disc and registration form.

Name _____
Address _____
Postcode _____
Tel. No. _____
Name of Pet _____
Type _____ Colour _____

HEALTH

Hidden hazards in the calendar of the oyster eater

ASKED if modern oyster farming made it safe to eat an oyster when there wasn't an "r" in the month, David Fitzsimons, director of the Bureau of Hygiene and Tropical Diseases, replied: "In general it is still a good adage, but even so I don't look at the calendar when I'm offered oysters, but rely upon my hostess and the public health service to make certain that they have come from an uncontaminated source."

A quick glance at the statistics on the outbreaks of food poisoning due to shellfish — most are traced back to oysters — shows that the greater the likelihood of a year having a good claret vintage, so also is there a greater chance that it will be a bad year for oyster poisoning. For both grapes and water-borne infections flourish in a hot summer. The number of outbreaks in Britain every year varies between two and 15 and averages around nine, usually striking groups of people. In Australia, it seems that the climatic conditions needed for an outbreak are different. This year, which has been abnormally wet, oyster lovers in Sydney have had to contend with more shellfish poisoning than in any year since 1978.

Australian health experts blame the dilution of the salt in the river by upstream flood waters, which have also washed in more pollution than usual. Oysters are filter-feeders: in the combined process of breathing and feeding, an active oyster filters many gallons of water a day through its gills. In cold weather, an oyster almost hibernates: in hot weather its activity increases and more water is filtered. And, also because of the warm weather, it is more likely to be contaminated by viruses and bacteria. In the filtering

process, particles of food as well as pathogenic organisms are caught on the sticky under-surface of the gills, from where they can be swept into the funnel-shaped mouth and passed through the oyster's stomach and guts before being ejected some hours after entering the shell. The bacteria are discharged with other undigested debris, but viruses remain in the oyster's flesh.

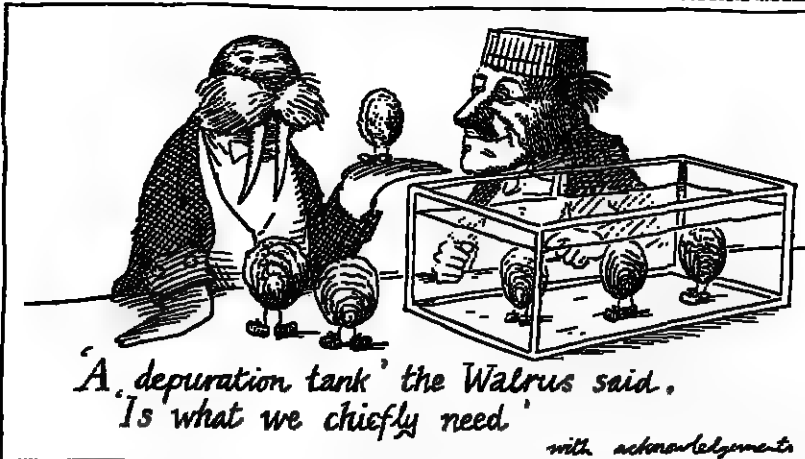
After being collected, oysters are subjected to a purification process known to health workers as depuration, and to oyster fishermen as plumping or laying out. The procedure involves keeping the oyster, for a time, in clean water, where it will flush out any bacteria which might have been lurking in its digestive system. It is a comparatively efficient way of eliminating bacteria, but not viruses, including the enteric viruses and hepatitis A, which are now responsible for more oyster food poisoning than typhoid, paratyphoid and other bacteria.

Another expert was not as trusting as Dr Fitzsimons. Conscious of the bacteria he can see down his microscope and the viruses he cannot, he said: "Eat oysters? I wouldn't dream of it, not at any time of the year, regardless of the month. Even when shellfish are cooked they're not always cooked for long enough to kill harmful organisms." But, while he may have saved himself from food poisoning, he has missed out on valuable nutrients. Oysters contain vitamin A, B and C, and are particularly rich in B. Portion for portion they provide more iron and copper than liver, so it is not surprising that in Victorian times, when they were cheap, oysters were a valuable part of the working man's diet.

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttford

FRANCIS MOSLEY



Virgin territory

As the furore after the recent butchers' dinner has demonstrated, John Selwyn Gummer, churchman and Agriculture Minister, has the art of expressing a view succinctly, not so long ago he attacked the premise of the Bishop of Durham that there could be a state of symbolic virginity by suggesting that the bishop's argument would not have found favour with the mothers of any daughters he knew.

Last week, the High Court judge who awarded £20,000 slander damages to a woman whose husband had implied that she had lost her virginity before her wedding night evidently saw virginity,

and its diagnosis, in the same clear-cut way as the minister does.

In pre-Second World War days, when the emphasis on the need for pre-nuptial virginity was more widespread, a textbook of forensic medicine listed the "tell-tale signs" which the astute doctor should note as the clues to a woman's past sexual experience.

The doctor was advised not merely to examine the genital region, but also to study the woman's general demeanour. For the author felt, like the hostess in one of Evelyn Waugh's novels, that the loss of virginity altered a patient's deportment. If all else failed, examination of the breasts might provide the answers, for they were supposed to

change in shape, and the nipples in colour, after sexual experience as well as child bearing.

Contemporary gynaecology textbooks were already teaching that these signs were nonsense and that even after a gynaecological examination it is usually impossible to be certain if a woman is a virgin. The cardinal sign of the presence or absence of a hymen, a thin perforated membrane which occludes the vaginal entrance, but experience shows that this membrane, when present, is in all shapes and sizes and may even be virtually absent; consequently, the best a doctor can usually say is "probably is" or "probably isn't".

Despite medical doubts, the hymen is still regarded in many cultures as being of such value that young, rich brides who have a deficient one, for whatever reason, come to London to make good their loss. In the Harley Street area, there are several doctors who are skilled in the plastic surgery needed. The operation is not cheap — it will probably cost about £1,000 — and requires a general anaesthetic.

One surgeon who has made a mini-specialty of the subject said that he had achieved such beautiful results that they would deceive the most worldly husband. He feels that if any defect is so important to a patient that it can upset her enjoyment of life, it is a doctor's duty to try to correct it.

Patients' and doctors' views on what constitutes virginity often vary, to the point where diagnosis can become confused. Often, the patient's belief could be described as symbolic virginity, for some feel that as long as a

condom is worn virginity is not lost, and others resort to practices which they feel are still compatible with virginity but which would surprise the bishop and amaze their mothers.

Going for the throat

An opera audience can be lavish with its praise, but when disapproving is savage and makes no allowances. Last Monday the audience booed and jeered when Walter Donati's voice failed in his Covent Garden debut. He struggled through *Il Trovatore*, but — possibly wisely — avoided the curtain call.

Laryngitis, a minor inflammation of the laryngeal chords and surrounding tissue, is usually due to infection, either viral or bacterial, an allergy or even an exposure to irritant dust pollens or tobacco smoke. But in Mr Donati's case, the cause was probably a "first-case, the young, rich brides who have a deficient one, for whatever reason, come to London to make good their loss. In the Harley Street area, there are several doctors who are skilled in the plastic surgery needed. The operation is not cheap — it will probably cost about £1,000 — and requires a general anaesthetic."

A first-night throat is usually no more than a dry larynx caused by anxiety inducing changes in catecholamine levels; it produces a sensation familiar to anyone who has experienced fear. It is possible that such was Mr Donati's enthusiasm to do well that he over-trained — excessive use of the voice can also induce temporary laryngitis — but the probability is that, if there was no infection, initially he was suffering from a first-night throat and that by continuing to sing he reduced his throat to a condition where it was described as "red raw, and bloody". A decision will be taken later on whether he will sing tomorrow night.

BREATHING SPACE: GEORGE MELLY

I work as if I'm a workaholic, but I don't seek the work out — it seeks me out. I tend to eat too much, with intermittent dieting. My tastes are changing as I get older (he is 63) in that I prefer simpler food — but simpler food on a rather high level, like grouse and oysters. I'm not very interested in elaborate food that comes in sauces. Given half a chance, I'm also extremely fond of working man's caviar — bacon, black pudding, fried eggs, baked beans, cups of strong, hot tea.

When I diet (which I'm doing successfully at the moment — I've lost a stone) I simply try to cut back. I eat things that don't please or interest me at all, like salads without dressing, for a bit, until the scales look bearable, then I put it all on again.

I diet mainly because of vanity, but I don't like panting going up a flight of stairs, and I don't like finding it difficult to do up my shoes. My aim is to keep my weight down to 12 stone 7 pounds, which is still too fat. I take it off very quickly once I start. I don't have a sweet tooth; the



'In the evening I have gin, wine and probably a couple of brandies, which for me is practically being teetotal'

temptation is more spaghetti, bread, potatoes, fried things. I'm very fond of alcohol, but I drink a minute amount compared with what I did at one period in my life, when I drank at least a bottle of brandy a night plus gins and things during the day. Now I'll have a dry sherry around noon, maybe a glass of wine at lunch and then in the evening I'll have two or three gin and tonics and half a bottle of wine and probably a couple of brandies, which for me is practically being teetotal.

I never exercise. I hate it. I've loathed it since I was a child. I'll walk from A to B if it's not too far, and I fly-fish a

lot. To those who don't know about fishing it may seem that you just sit. But you do not: you walk, you wade, you travel several miles a day, and also there's a lot of activity in the arms and shoulder muscles. But that is my only form of exercise.

Up until about six months ago I was smoking about 80 cigarettes a day and then I began to have some difficulty with breathing, so I've stopped, more or less, with occasional lapses late at night, and the odd cigar when it all becomes unbearable.

My loss of hearing happened gradually, probably due to being exposed to loud

noises for most of my life, although it didn't happen until I was 50, not 25, like rock people. Not everyone becomes deaf from noise, but I must have had some inherent condition. It's not too bad because I wear a hearing aid, but I have problems with high notes and consonants so sometimes I'll answer a question in a nonsensical, mad way. For example, I'll hear: "Is your smile comfortable?" instead of "Who's the chief constable?"

I don't feel heat or cold much. I can wear a thick suit on the hottest day and I'm fine on the coldest day without a suit and I've always had perfect blood pressure. Knowing a bit about my lifestyle, the doctor is always surprised that it is boringly, classically correct when I have a check-up. I had very bad pneumonia three years ago and nearly died of flu as a child, and there was a burst ulcer in the early Sixties. No repetition of same, didn't need operating on, didn't need a blood transfusion — I'm quite tough, physically.

Interview by Pamela Nowicka

Scars that outlive the memory of a mauling

Dog attacks on children pose terrible problems for doctor and victim, writes Lee Rodwell

Four-year-old Caroline Williams who needed 200 stitches in her face after an attack by a Rotweiler and an alsatian — has gone home from hospital and appears to be well on the way to recovery at her home in Dudley, West Midlands.

Some children are not so lucky. Each year, thousands of children are taken to accident and emergency units for treatment after having been bitten by dogs. Many of the injuries are relatively minor, but what happened to Caroline — and 23-month-old Ryan Bedwell of Reading, Berkshire, who was bitten in the face on Tuesday by a Jack Russell terrier — is no isolated incident. A spate of dog attacks in the past year has resulted in severe injury and even death.

Doctors know that dog bites pose particular problems for child victims. David Sharpe, consultant plastic surgeon at St Luke's Hospital in Bradford, says: "Dog bites are often quite deep, so they can cause pockmarks. Skin and muscle are usually loosely separated, but when scarring forms between them, as it may with dog bites, the skin can become tethered to the muscle beneath."

Apart from the puncture marks caused by a dog's teeth, there is likely to be further damage caused by the child trying to pull away. Mr Sharpe says: "Wedges of tissue may be torn out. Normally, you would rebuild these areas using the original components. You try to use local tissue because of the colour match. Skin grafts are occasionally necessary, but they are not as satisfactory and produce a red and unattractive scar."

One of the problems with dog bites on a child's face is that pieces may have been torn out of the nose, lips or eyelids. This is highly specialized tissue and is difficult to rebuild. If half the upper lip is ripped away, the only way to repair it is to use part of the lower lip.

Plastic surgeons are aware that the way we look is more than a matter of vanity. "The two key areas where people notice deformities are the eyes and the lips because that is how we signal socially," Mr Sharpe says. "When you are operating you have to be aware that a millimetre out in alignment around eyelids and mouth can be immediately obvious. There have been times when I have deliberately built in a slight smile."

A child who is savaged by a dog is likely to be treated in two stages. Oliver Fenton, consultant plastic surgeon at the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital, says: "A dog bite causes a relatively blunt injury, so there will be damaged and dead tissue around the edges of the wound. This is a good medium for bacteria [although a dog's bite is not nearly as bad as a human's in terms of the risk of infection]. So, initially, the wounds need to be cleaned. A plastic surgeon would normally make the wound slightly



Recovering: Caroline Williams, aged four, leaves hospital with her mother Denise

bigger in order to remove any bacteria and dead tissue and to get sharper, straighter edges which tend to give better primary healing when sutured together.

"Doing this may also give you the opportunity to choose the direction the scar will go in. The body is made up of relaxed skin tension lines. Scars placed within these will heal well; scars which cross them at right angles will heal badly."

After this, Mr Fenton says, it is a case of "wait and see". "There are two types of scars,

hospital, it may be possible to do a definitive repair then. There have been advances — suture material has improved, and magnification techniques offer better alignment.

There is no guarantee every victim of a dog attack will be treated by a plastic surgeon. How important is this? Mr Fenton says: "If a child of mine was badly bitten by a dog, I would prefer the case to be dealt with by someone experienced in the management of soft tissue trauma. If the child has been severely bitten on the

'There is a phrase in plastic surgery — never do today what you can honourably put off until tomorrow'



Caroline after the attack

hypertrophic and keloid. A keloid scar continues to grow outside the boundaries of the original injury. Most of the scars we see are hypertrophic; these are scars which are red and raised, firm and painful and can take up to two years to settle down properly. This can be a very difficult period for parents, and we may come under a lot of pressure from them to 'do something now'. However, whereas the original injury was the dog's fault, if you operate again too soon and you fail to improve things, the fault will be yours."

"There is a much-used phrase in plastic surgery — never do today what you can honourably put off until tomorrow."

Mr Sharpe says that after initial treatment it is necessary to wait before making a final judgement. "Otherwise, it is like trying to hit a moving target." However, he says that if a plastic surgeon is available when the child arrives at the

face, it should be treated by a plastic surgeon."

He says that if no plastic surgeon is immediately available, the child should be given a tetanus injection and antibiotics. Soft tissue damage can be left untreated for up to 24 hours without risking further deterioration.

Even with the most skilled surgeon in the world, however, it is likely that if a child has been badly marked in the attack, he or she will be left with noticeable scars. How much can plastic surgery do later on?

"There are a lot of misconceptions about plastic surgery," Mr Fenton says. "We cannot do a lot of things the public thinks we can. It is not uncommon to have a patient say, at the end of a long reconstructive period: 'I can always have plastic surgery, can't I?'"

The plastic surgeon can try to disguise scars, either by altering the direction in which they run or by breaking them up, mak-

ing them less conspicuous. For example, a scar which runs across a cheek may be broken up so the patient is left with a scar that drops into a natural mark, such as the line which runs from the nose to the corner of the mouth.

The fact that the young heal faster than the old is not necessarily an advantage. Mr Fenton says: "The young also lay down a lot of scar tissue, which means their scars are more noticeable. On older people the skin is looser — you can throw more away. On a five-year-old's face there is nothing to spare."

A child may also carry psychological scars. Eileen Bradbury is the only full-time clinical counsellor in plastic surgery in Britain. She assesses and counsels children and their parents in the Leeds and Bradford areas.

She says that in the period immediately after a dog attack a child will usually look back at what happened through nightmares and flashbacks, while the parents will worry about the future.

"To the time after the injury children need a lot of help. What I do depends on their age and their needs in terms of social skills. I use a video quite extensively. Children need to see how others see them. A child who looks different feels different and may become vulnerable or anxious."

Appearance is very important in our society, and children are as likely as adults to judge by appearances. There are times when it matters more: when children enter school, from eight to 10 years, when they start moving away from their family and towards their peers, and in early adolescence."

Ultimately, it seems, it is not the severity of scarring which is of paramount importance, but the child's self-consciousness about it. Some children get upset about minor scarring, others can cope with major scarring — it depends on their personality and the reactions of other people.

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EVERYONE HAS

THE BLOCKBUSTING NOVEL BY Susan Crossland

Shirley

Would have been

Jacobson's

Shifting

Which sex

MA

GOOD NEW

FICTION

The finer points of disembowelling

Anne McElvoy surveys a febrile, Fifties Berlin complete with spies, love and unspeakable act

A mild scent of mothballs hangs inevitably over a novel which ends with the protagonist imagining a valedictory clamour on to the rickety platform at the Potsdamer Platz to gaze at the Berlin Wall "before it was all torn down". But, set as it is in the febrile Berlin of the 1950s, this one has the advantage of having been conceived as a period piece when it was written. Today's readers, however, have the telescopic sensation of an extra layer of time between themselves and the events.

With the linguistic twists of an un-inspired travel writer McEwan insists on letting us know that he has been to Berlin. Food is rendered doggedly in German, street names catalogued with painful exactitude and hyperactive Germanisms pop up with disconcerting randomness in the flow of prose. These devices, as a writer with McEwan's feeling for the ordinary must surely have realized, do not alone supply the atmosphere of a place — especially not Berlin.

Based on a miscarried Anglo-American operation to build a tunnel under the Soviet sector, the novel particularizes the inequality of the Allies' relationship in the treacherous aftermath of war, when it was deprived of the cohesive power of a common enemy. The Russians, by contrast, are sketched as an almost mythical presence, an unseen enemy vulnerable only to the bloodless attacks of decoding equipment. The front-line soldiers are now engineers, like the hapless Leonard, disgorged from his Dollis Hill lair to fight battles of bleeps and numbers. Throughout runs Churchill's prediction of "the shadows of victory", of Britain, emerged poor and proud from one conflict, to be caught between the two super-powers at the beginning of the next.

Few writers have McEwan's ability to evoke the agony of the awkward Brit, whose inferiorities are mirrored by his place in the larger world of fast-talking, eager-willing Americans who are calling the shots. Leonard's relationship with

Maria, dogged by the vestiges of the war, is uncompromisingly dissected, but lacks the clarity of perception of previous McEwan duos which the magnifying glass rendered uncomfortably but realistically large. Here the lens mists up as the two sway a touch drunkenly between credibility and authorial convenience.

Ultimately to blame is the uneasy confusion of genre: as a spy novel it is fuddled because the author is too interested in the sexual and social motivations of his characters to be able to build up the concentrated intellectual spin required for a powerful denouement. Even when the baddie is revealed — and there are not that many characters to choose from — it is hard to care.

Squatting darkly at the centre of the narrative is a dreadful deed, a disconcertingly itemized exposition of the evil of which love is capable, although I found it difficult to silence the trivializing gremia who

THE INNOCENT

By Ian McEwan

Cape, £12.95

whispered that it was inevitable that McEwan should discover the finer points of disembowelling some time in his writing career. His previous strength in conveying the compulsion of motiveless action does not survive once a motive is at hand, however, an insufficient reason for an unspeakable act seems curiously less credible than none at all.

Flashes of satiric humour come as a welcome relief. The frantic mongrel snuffing at a suitcase full of human remains watched fondly by its mistress — "one of those owners who does not like to cross their pets" — is a cameo of street life in a city where elderly ladies really do treat their dogs more politely than their fellow humans.

Inspired nuggets like this and a sense of time, if not place, rescue an uneven enterprise. It is not the best of McEwan's work, still less powerful enough to fix the place of the old Berlin in our new cultural consciousness, but he is the only writer I know who can make one combine an "ugh" and a giggle out loud while pausing to gather strength for his next onslaught of language and imagery.



GLYN BOYD HART

Violence, veiled by ritual

Nicola Murphy

AMONGST WOMEN
By John McGahern
Faber, £11.99

At the centre of *Amongst Women* is Michael Moran, an ex-republican captain turned farmer, living with his second wife, Rose, three daughters and youngest son. Instead of glorious tales of destruction of the Black and Tans, McGahern finds drama in the particularities of daily life. Through focus on exactly how and when the family laid the table, put on the kettle and told the rosary, McGahern produces a novel of extreme tension and hypnotic power. Comparisons with Chekhov once more are apt.

McGahern builds up an atmosphere of intense claustrophobia through the family's ritualistic actions. In the manner of Beckett he describes the underlying violence and desperation that the rituals seek to sanctify with a spare style, pared of all flowery verbiage and excessive description. He creates a repressive home dominated by Moran, an embittered, brooding man, and tyrannical father and husband, who now scorns the IRA and those for whose freedom he once fought.

Moran seeks perfection not in the state but in the family. It is only in a stable and united home life that Moran finds security and happiness. Any signs of individuality are crushed: university is forbidden fruit for his scholarship-level daughter and all self-expression is frowned upon. Moran uses "Catholicism" and "family" to demand obedience. At any challenge to his authority he orders a telling of the rosary, a stint in the fields or a kiss. He does not know how to show love. He only understands possession.

In turn his wife and children both love and hate him. All the children work desperately to escape through jobs, marriage and even exile. They want to be as far away as possible. Or so they think. All four are drawn back. Their escapes are as much of a ritual as the inevitable return: family is in their blood.

Only Luke the eldest can contemplate the final break and the ultimate betrayal — to become more English than the English. But with freedom he loses all the real strength that is also part and parcel of Moran's family life. At their father's funeral with which the book closes, it is not Luke but the women who walk away as leaders, as Moran's heirs.

In a mere 184 pages, McGahern fuses past and present, repression and individuality, aspiration and conflict in a seamless narrative of extraordinary tension and effect. *Amongst Women* is much more than a good book, it is an overwhelming experience.

AUTHORS

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Past imperfect, present tense

Jasper Rees

LAST LOVES

By Alan Sillitoe

Grafton, £12.95

THE GARDENER

By David Pownall

Gollancz, £13.95

THEN AGAIN

By Jenni Diski

Bloomsbury, £13.99

THE STRAWBERRY JAM DIVORCE

By Myra Greenberg

Allison & Busby, £11.95

meanings of their pettiest thoughts, words and deeds. David Pownall, on the other hand, has somewhat too much confidence in the extraordinariness of his characters. For all its neatly carved symmetries and symbols, the impression one extracts from *The Gardener* is that his dramatic personae are merely inexplicable, and certainly less real than the lovingly detailed north English landscape they inhabit. Two ba-

bies born in a Yorkshire village parish are baptised by a free-thinking priest. They grow up apart, but when their fathers die the priest appoints himself surrogate parent. He encourages his two charges to meet, fall in love, and play out the role of God's beautiful elect which he assigns to them. The budding of symbiotic passion is done very well, but when the lovers go to different universities things go wrong, both with their love and with the narrative. Pauline's mad mother commits suicide, Pauline herself marries a rich arms dealer and Eric flunks his degree to work as a gardener on the newly-weds' Surrey estate. Pownall keeps the reader posted on what is going through his characters' minds with an almost evangelical zeal to inform, but even he often finds himself strapped for an explanation of their preposterous antics.

Being a study of schizophrenia, it is uncertain how many main characters there actually are in Jenni Diski's ambitious fourth novel, *Then Again*. Is it two, or four, or three? There is Esther,

separated 40-year-old and mother of one, and her atavistic alter ego, a troubled 14-year-old called Elizabeth, who visits her in her dreams. Then there is Esther's daughter Katya, also 14, and Katya's unnamed interior voice, which persuades her she has been visited by God. When Katya goes missing, presumed chemically unbalanced, Esther continues to paint crockery for a living and canoodle with her psychoanalyst boyfriend, while a memory of a forgotten past before she was adopted by her parents, linked to her worries for Katya, begins to stampede unconsciously through her subconscious. This all sounds tortuous and confusing, which is perhaps partly the effect intended, but out of the psychological duplicity of her characters Diski constructs an intriguing web of interlocked narratives.

The Strawberry Jam Divorce, a first novel by Myra Greenberg, is also about mental self-torture but, filtered through a teenager's naive first-person voice, it is more disposed to lather anguish in humour. Kevin tells his own story, in which he discovers his mother in bed with a fat man, watches his father baroque her and then escapes into the night to avoid witnessing the family self-combust. The narrative's charm resides largely in the laxative flow of Greenberg's punctuation-shy, digressive, confessional style.

Wrong goodbye

CRIME

Marcel Berlins

POODLE SPRINGS
By Raymond Chandler &
Robert B. Parker
Macdonald, £12.95

local casino a hundred grand; the man also turns out to be a photographer of pornography, a bigamist and, soon, a murder suspect.

Marlowe's investigations bring him into that familiar Chandlerian low-life territory populated by cynical cops, hoodlums and their puppet masters, bar-tenders, and regretful women with a past to hide. Everywhere, he is confronted by his matrimonial attachment, patronized in his new milieu, no longer taken seriously in his old. But there are no mean streets in Poodle Springs, and Marlowe's forays into Los Angeles are insipid echoes of past visits.

Occasionally, a snatch of description or dialogue evokes old atmospheres; but there are not many reminders that Chandler, *in form*, was one of America's great novelists, nor that Parker, *in form*, is one of the most sparkling novelists around today. Worst of all, action is made subordinate to the War Of The Marlowes.

The *Playback* warnings have come true. Linda nags Philip incessantly to dip into her fortune; he explains tediously often that his Code forbids such spousal sponging. All this does not help the marriage, and, I fear, the reader may not care much anyway. In the end, the once noble Marlowe is in danger of becoming a middle-aged, sulking bore.

The two bluff sexagenarian coves in Alan Sillitoe's moving *Last Loves* speak the blunt patois of the bourgeoisie and lead the (almost) blameless lives of unremarkable middle-class citizens, and yet they run into terrible trouble. For his 60th birthday, Bernard's wife sends him and his old mucker George down memory lane to Malaysia, where 40 years earlier, when it was still known as Malaya, they fought the communists in the jungle. As is the way with journeys in novels, they find out more about themselves and each other in these few days than, for all their seniority to years, they have gleaned from life hitherto. George, introspective and unhappily divorced, falls in love with a sensitive spinster called Gloria who is also searching for a route back into her own history, while rowdy Bernard boastfully natters on about his extramarital affairs until he receives some bad marital news from home. When the two veterans, after wassailing their way round the country's much altered cities and beaches, finally escort Gloria on a retrace into the jungle, it is not the self-contained past that they confront but the unforgiving, danger-strewn, unquantifiable present.

These dedicatedly ordinary characters would scarcely count as involving were it not for Sillitoe's hawk-eyed ability to tease out the

The Constantine nobody knew

Peter Jones

EMPEROR

By Colin Thubron

Heinemann, £12.95

The life of Constantine the Great is plunged in historical obscurity. What, then, are art and empathy for? Thubron's wonderfully entertaining novel imaginatively re-creates for us that mysterious period leading up to Constantine's conversion to Christianity.

The year is 338AD. Constantine is dead, but his tutor has discovered a cache of documents relating to the year 312AD when Constantine, moving against Rome and its tyrant emperor Maximian, was "converted". The documents include Constantine's diaries, letters of his wife Fausta (sister of Maximian), papers of his previous tutor (the pagan Synesius), and the correspondence of Hosi, Bishop of Cordoba, a camp-follower. Despite advice to the contrary, the tutor decides to publish: the extravagant accounts spread by the Church of Constantine's conversion cannot be allowed to remain unchallenged.

If this scenario sounds slightly forced, it is soon forgotten as Thubron plunges us expertly into

the siege of Verona and a maelstrom of interacting diaries and letters, with Constantine at the eye of the storm. Two issues quickly emerge: what is the nature of Constantine's relationship with his beautiful but distant and frigid wife Fausta, and for how much longer can Constantine remain a faithful Sun-worshipper, when all about him he senses darkness and gloom? These issues come to a head when, after Verona is taken in a night battle, Constantine's closest friend dies with a spear through his liver, and a letter of Fausta to her cousin is accidentally intercepted and returned — to Constantine. His struggle to see some hope in his friend's death and his sense of betrayal by his wife drive him to search elsewhere for "meaning". Synesius's pagan-

ism begins to seem thin and profitless, compared with the hope of the resurrection Hosi offers instead. And so to the capture of Rome and the vision of the sign of the Cross.

Thubron himself raises the question of historicity in his foreword, and for what it is worth, it seems unlikely to me that any ancient would be quite so angsty-ridden about his relationship with his wife. I was not wholly convinced by Thubron's portrayal of the thought-process of a 4th-century pagan and barbarian, and it does not ring true that Synesius and Hosi should regard him as such a clod when the evidence of his diaries suggests quite the opposite. But so what? The rapid crossfire of documents is thrillingly paced, compelling our involvement in the writers' concerns, and the intellectual and spiritual turmoil of the age emerges persuasively.

History it may not be, but it would be a dull god that did not warm to the rich inventiveness of Thubron's reconstruction.

Adult games played for real

SCIENCE FICTION

Tom Hutchinson

THE BARSOOM PROJECT

By Larry Niven and Steven Barnes
Pan, £13.95

It's astounding what disbelief-it-or-not data you pick up in this launch-leader for Pan's new SF hardbacks: vampires hate victims to eat garlic, because it sours the taste of blood; flirting outside marriage is called "extramarital tactophilia"; the best way to slim is via The Fat Ripper diet-plan which involves being chased by Genghis Khan hordes. Not so much reviewing as an education in itself. And I am duly grateful.

As, indeed, so should readers be — grateful, that is — because the influence of collaborator Steven Barnes has turned the great hardcore creator of Ringworld, Larry Niven, fantasy-sof in the technical edges. Their *Game Park* — a wonder-world of pastimes for adults to compete in — is not new, but never so completely, almost

casually realized. Illusions are played so much for dangerously real as to be almost indistinguishable from the real thing. But, just in case we become too mired in conjecture about the nature of things as they are and as they seem, the authors stir it all in a pot of plot about an attempted take-over of Earth, how it affects a

neurotic woman and a stolid security-chief, and a plan to settle humans on Mars (Barsoom is derived from Edgar Rice Burroughs's John Carter novels). All this, plus a villain who lives in a glass tower, which makes his shattering end only too transparent, a stone's throw from predictability. Attentive reading is required, treading with care on the technological facts so that you don't fall through the fantasy-crevices into bafflement. But, persevere and your progress reaches positive enlightenment. And, who knows what useful tips about vampires — oh, and Eskimo myths — you'll gather on the way. Just the sort of stuff to stun-gun them with at the next dinner-party. And never get invited again.

EVERYONE HAS RULING PASSIONS

THE BLOCKBUSTING NOVEL BY

Susan Crosland

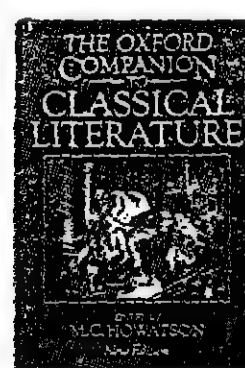
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BBC 1

- 6.00 Cee-fax
6.30 BBC Breakfast News presented by Nicholas Witchell and Laurie Mayer 5.55
Regional news and weather
9.00 News and weather followed by Open Air. Viewers comment on yesterday's television. To contribute ring 061 511 0424
9.20 Gloria Liza. Topical magazine series presented by Gloria Humphord
10.00 News and weather followed by Matchpoint. General knowledge quiz show
10.25 Children's BBC, presented by Simon Parkin, begins with Playdays. The story is *Piggy and the Mole*, written and narrated by Pam Ayres
10.55 Five To Eleven. Celebrating Wesak, the festival of the Enlightenment of the Buddha
11.00 News and weather followed by Open Air. Eamonn Holmes and Jayne Irving with viewers' comments and suggestions about television
12.00 News and weather followed by Daytime Live. Includes a report by Sir Michael Hordern on the locations that inspired the novelist Thomas Hardy
12.55 Regional news and weather
1.00 One O'Clock News with Philip Hayton. Weather
1.30 Neighbours. (Cee-fax) 1.50 Matchpoint. Angela Rippon hosts another round of the innovative quiz show
2.15 Film: Thursday's Game (1974) starring Gene Wilder, Bob Newhart, Elen Burstyl and Cloris Leachman. A sparkling adult comedy, wasted in this time slot, about two men facing their mid-life crisis who get away from their

BBC 2

- 6.45 Open University: A Women's Place? Ends at 7.10
8.00 News 8.15 Westminster. Highlights from yesterday's proceedings in Parliament, presented by Peter Mayne
9.00 Look, Stranger. A postman in a remote part of Yorkshire is also a columnist for the *Ripon Gazette* (r)
9.25 Daytime On Two. Geometric shapes
9.40 Friendship 10.00 A profile of Benetton's Sailing Cup 10.20 A. B. and the children. (Cee-fax) 10.45 11.00 Growing up in Victorian times
11.20 Making use of redundant farmland
11.40 A disabled teenager wants to go to a disco with her able-bodied friend
12.03 Working in a garden centre
12.25 The advantages to Britain of Africa being split into colonies 12.50 Teaching infants 1.20 CB. Filming 1.25 Animal Fair 1.40 Children's
2.00 News and weather followed by Watch (r)
2.15 Osprey Watch. Ospreys return to Loch Garten in the Scottish Highlands (r)
3.00 Look, Stranger. An interview with a woman who left her comfortable life to sign on as a cook on her captain husband's ship
3.00 News and weather followed by Westminster Live. Includes the Prime Minister's Question Time 3.50
4.00 River Journeys. The Corps. Michael Wood travels up the River Great Ouse, the capital of Zaire (r). (Cee-fax)
5.05 Snap! Heather Angel gives tips on photographing pets (r). (Cee-fax)

- wives every Thursday and discuss their business and marital problems. Wickedly funny script by James L. Brooks and directed with panache by Robert Moore
3.50 Rupert, narrated by Ray Brooks 3.55 Mervyn Taylor. Mark Chatterton with David Self's story Panishment Book
4.00 Laurel and Hardy. Cartoon version
4.05 New Adventures of Mighty Mouse 4.20 Simon and The Witch. Episode 12 (r) 4.35 Tricky Business. Children's series about a magic shop and its customers. Guests this week are Paul J. Reeve and Ava De Souza
5.00 Newsround
5.05 Play Pies. Looks back at when Churchill became Prime Minister 50 years ago today, and features a live performance by Japanese Kodo drummers. (Cee-fax)
5.35 Neighbours (r). (Cee-fax) Northern Ireland. Sports 5.40 Inside Music
6.00 Six O'Clock News with Anna Ford and Andrew Harvey. Weather
6.30 Regional News Magazine. Northern Ireland. Neighbours
7.00 Top Of The Pops presented by Gary Davies
7.30 EastEnders. More Cockney dramas involving the denizens of Albert Square. (Cee-fax)
8.00 Tomorrow's World. Includes a report on a new lightweight car for racing yachts and how it could be marketed, and Howard Stablesford in the United States where he visits an experimental mine that is installing a parachute underground
8.30 Russ Abbot. Russ Abbot with more comic routines and wacky sketches (r). (Cee-fax)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News with Marilyn Lewis. Regional news and weather

9.30 CrimeWatch UK. This month's edition of the sometimes voyeuristic but often revealing series includes an appeal for information to find the killer of Dr David Birtwell, a consultant practising in Middlesbrough, who was brutally murdered in February (Cee-fax)



Michael Heseltine, MP, replies (10.15pm)

- 10.15 Question Time. Joining Peter Seaton around the clock this week are Michael Heseltine MP, David O'Connell, managing director of the Barbican Centre, John Prescott MP, Shadow Transport Secretary, and Alan Watkins, the Observer columnist
11.15 CrimeWatch UK Update
11.25 Cagney and Lacey. Gritty and polished police series. Tonight the two female detectives investigate a child molesting case and refuse to give up even when the odds appear to be stacked against them. Starring Sharon Glass and Tyne Daly (r). Northern Ireland: D-Day to Berlin. To 12.25am
12.15am Weather

- 5.15 The Quest For Tanna Tuvu. Richard Feynman, the Nobel Prize-winning physicist, was fascinated by Tanna Tuvu, a Shengri-La on the edge of Mongolia. The film was made just before his death (r). (Cee-fax)
6.00 Film: The Wild, Wild West Revisited (1979). Robert Conrad and Rose Martin star in this pilot for an aborted series. The plot, such as it is, has the two special agents coming out of retirement to free some heads of state, but themselves getting captured by the bad guys. Directed by Burt Kennedy
7.25 The Muzzies: Workers in Mind. The first of a new series investigates stress in the workplace. The reporter is Yvonne Roberts. Northern Ireland: Gardening Together
8.00 Yes, Minister. The magnificent comedy series by Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn, all the funnier for being written by a whistler of the truth. It is extraordinary how real politicians, from Mrs Thatcher downwards, tap it up. This is the one in which Jim Hacker discovers that his department is responsible for the surveillance equipment he tried to ban as an opposition MP (r). (Cee-fax)
8.30 Nature. The last programme in the penetrating environmental series looks at the appalling conditions in which battery hens are forced to live
9.00 KYTV. Daff comedy series lampooning satellite television
9.30 Hypotheticals: Television in The Market. The first series of the long-running ITV show now being carried by the BBC concludes with a lively discussion about the shape of television in the

1990s. After two moderators from Harvard Law School, responsibility for lobbying out the awkward dilemmas passes to the barrister Geoffrey Robertson. His scenarios cover such hot potatoes as sponsorship, pornography and jamming and the questioning is sharp. On the receiving end is the show's usual strong assembly of experts, and people who think they are experts. As usual there are too many, with the result that individual contributions tend to get diluted and some panelists end up managing to contribute very little. But the format is almost guaranteed to provide an hour of gripping television and looks good for a few years yet. (Cee-fax)



Mary Whitehouse on television (9.30pm)

- 10.30 Newsnight
11.15 The Late Show. Arts and media magazine 11.55 Weather
12.00 Open University: Weekend Outlook 12.05am Education... and So to Described. Ends at 12.35

ITV LONDON

- 6.00 TV-am begins with News followed by Good Morning Britain introduced by Beatrice Haller. With news at 6.30, 7.00, 7.30, 8.00, 8.30 and 9.00. After 9.00, the Channel 4 News and the Channel 4 News
9.25 Cross Words. Crossword puzzle game
9.55 Thames News and weather
10.00 The Time... The Place... John Stapleton chairs a topical discussion
10.40 This Morning. Magazine series presented by Judy Finnigan and Richard Madeley. Includes national and international news at 10.55 and regional news at 11.55 followed by national weather
12.10 The Riddlers. For the young 12.30 Home and Away
1.00 News at One and weather 1.20 Thames News and weather
1.30 Somebody's Children. The third programme in the series about adoption examines the experiences of two natural and adoptive parents 2.00 A Country Practice. Medical drama series
2.30 TV Weekly. Anne Diamond takes a behind-the-scenes look at popular ITV and Channel 4 programmes
3.00 Sounds Like Music. Three more contestants line up to be musically

- grilled by Bobby Crush 3.25 Thames News and weather 3.30 Sons and Daughters
4.00 Huxley Pig (r) 4.15 The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin (r) 4.40 Enid Blyton's The Castle of Adventure. Ghostly thriller series
5.10 Blockbusters
5.40 News and weather
6.00 Home and Away (r)
6.20 Thames News and weather
7.00 Emmerdale. Enjoyable soap set in the Yorkshire Dales (Chad)
7.30 Sporting Triangles. Regulars Andy Gray, Jimmy Greaves and Emylin Hughes team up with Barry McEneaney, Dean Saunders and Garath Chiswick
8.00 The Bill. Authentic police drama still keeping up a terrific standard. Tonight the Sun Hill officers turn out in force for a night surveillance and June Ackland is left alone with a tough adversary
8.30 This Week: Prime Minister. A profile of the Labour leader, examining his qualifications for the country's top job. Julian Maryon interviews Neil Kinnock and his closest political allies to find out how his leadership style would work in Downing Street, and follows him behind the scenes in the run-up to last week's local elections

- 9.00 LA Live. Return of the glossy, fast-moving American courtroom series. (Cee-fax)
10.00 News at Ten and weather 10.30 Thames News and weather
10.35 The City Programme. Includes an examination of the world of Business Expansion Schemes; and does sport sponsorship give the City its money's worth?
11.05 01. Well, 071 or 081 for London wouldn't have been a very catchy title, now would it? Up-to-the-minute well acted drama focusing on the last years of an elderly, retired prostitute's life. While dying, she attempts to protect a young boy from the truth about his past. Directed by Michael Moran. Followed by News headlines
11.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H. 12.30am Contacts. Television's version of the personal column
1.00 Speed Chess. The Infokind European championship
1.30 Film: Madame Rosa (1977) starring Simone Signoret and Claude Rains. Well acted drama focusing on the last years of an elderly, retired prostitute's life. While dying, she attempts to protect a young boy from the truth about his past. Directed by Michael Moran. Followed by News headlines
3.30 Backroad. Dr Feagood. Concert footage of this veteran rock band.
4.30 America's Top Ten
5.00 ITN Morning News. Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 The Art of Landscape. Beautiful sights set to music
6.30 The Channel Four Daily
9.25 Schools
12.00 The Parliament Programme presented by Sue Cameron
12.30 Business Daily. Financial and business news service introduced by Susan Simons
1.00 Sesame Street. Pre-school learning series
2.00 A Full Life. Actor James Fox, who shot to fame in *The Servant* in the early 1960s, talks to Jill Cochrane about his life and why he became a committed socialist. Tonight he looks at the making for many years (r). (Oracle)
2.25 Channel 4 Racing from Chester. Brough Scott introduces live coverage of the Dee Stakes (2.45); the Graham's Machinery Sales Handicap Stakes (3.15); the Ormeau EBF Stakes (3.45); and the Haydock Park Leisure Centre Handicap (4.15). The race commentator is Graham Goodie
4.30 Fifteen-to-One. The quickfire general knowledge quiz presented by William G. Stewart
5.00 Garibaldi. The General. Franco Nero puts on the whiskers for another dramatized episode from the life of the Italian nationalist leader of the 19th century
6.00 Things to Come. A sort of *Tomorrow's World* beamed at younger viewers but delivered with an irreverence totally lacking in the BBC show. The tone is set with the very first item, about the Channel 4, the inventor who makes him see the world through HPVs, or human-powered vehicles. Except that one of them looks like a door wedge and the other like a go-kart, these HPVs are little more than bicycles. Thompson tries to argue that they are good to have a crash in and demonstrate by diving straight into a ball. If the HPV is an old idea dressed up to look like a new one, the programme also shows a Japanese robot which can not only read a piece of music but play it on the

- piano. As one of the presenters cheerfully concedes, however, Rachmaninov comes out sounding like Les Dawson
6.30 The Channel 4 News. Adult sitcom about two divorced men who decide to share a Greenwich Village home and encounter the problems of single parenthood. This week Alice finds that her anxiety about returning to college is well-founded (r)
7.00 Channel 4 News
7.50 Comment followed by Weather
8.00 Greek Fire. The eighth in an ambitious but sometimes ponderous series explores the legacy of ancient Greece on western art
8.30 The Crystal Maze. The bizarre looking Richard O'Brien leads another team through the cerebral and physical challenges. Last show in the series
9.30 My Two Dads. Channel 4 has had a highly successful record with bought-in American sitcoms and on the evidence of tonight's opening episode, *My Two Dads* could be another winner. Like many imports from across the Atlantic, it offers no great depth or subtlety but has been made with a polished professionalism in which snappy dialogue enhances a carefully crafted narrative. The premise is that a woman has died young, leaving a 12-year-old daughter whose father could one of two old college friends. The will stipulates that the man must look after her or she will be sent to a home. The putative fathers (Paul Rosner and Greg Evigan) are an ambitious businessman and a free-spirited artist but when it comes to dealing with young Nicole (Staci Kennan) neither has a clue. The joke, in fact, that when it comes to domestic arrangements the part 12-year-old is a lot smarter than the outwardly self-possessed adults.
10.00 Film: Rits, Sue and Bob, Too
A translation to the cinema screen of Andrea Dunbar's gritty play about two mindless Bradford schoolgirls seduced, not entirely unwillingly, by a randy estate agent for whom they

babysit. Dunbar's script, based to an extent on first-hand experience, sees the girls largely as victims of their environment and upbringing; the estate agent, a drunken violent thug, the meetings at school, the estate agent has none of these disadvantages. The spring of his behaviour is an unhappy marriage, or, if you want to try a feminist reading, unbridled male chauvinism. Herself from Bradford, the actress who plays with a sharp ear for the rhythms of northern speech while a well-judged use of appropriate locations enhances the feeling of authenticity. Unsuspecting viewers should be warned that it is not an edifying piece, and the language is often less than genteel. The control iron is played with a convincing naturalism by Stephen Finnan, Michelle Holmes and George Costigan and the director is Alan Clarke (who made *Scum*).



George Costigan, Stephen Finnan (10.00pm)

- 11.45 Film: Sunday in the Country (1984). Moving and evocative study of an old French artist looking back on his life, starring Louis Duker. With English subtitles. Directed with a Renaissance glow by Bertrand Tavernier. Ends at 1.00am

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Gearing set to reach 100% by end of year, says SB

By Stephen Leather

SMITHKLINE Beecham's bid to lower its debt mountain, the result of the merger of America's SmithKline Beecham and Britain's Beecham last July, is on target.

The international health-care group started the year with debts of £1.75 billion, but hopes to cut it to about £1 billion by the end of this year.

Reporting first quarter results, Mr Henry Wendi, the chairman, said he was confident he would reach his target of 100 per cent gearing by the year-end. By the end of the first quarter, debt had been cut to £1.47 billion. Since then, the group has sold off 32 US drug brands and cosmetic products for £32 million, its Yardley/Lentheric cosmetics business for £110 million, and raised \$800 million from an

issue of Auction-Rate Preference shares.

The company is hoping to bring in another £300 million from the sale of other businesses.

Pre-tax profits fell from £235 million to £219 million in the first quarter, reflecting a £51 million increase in interest charges arising from the merger.

On a pro-forma basis, pre-tax profits rose 21 per cent, although about one third of the increase in sales and trading profit were a direct result of exchange rate movements. There is also an after-tax extraordinary profit of £82 million from the sale of the Ambrosia, Bovril and Marmite brands to the CPC food group of the US. Overall sales of Tagamet, the group's

anti-ulcer drug, fell 3 per cent. The company blames trade devaluation in Japan and a 3 per cent fall in the US, where audit figures suggest that Tagamet prescriptions over the past year are down 12 per cent in the face of competition from Glaxo's Zantac.

There were large gains in sales of Dyazide, the blood pressure drug (up 67 per cent in the US), Enderix-B, the hepatitis-B vaccine (up 100 per cent), Augmentin, an antibiotic (up 54 per cent), and Timentin (42 per cent).

Mr Robert Bauman, the chief executive, whose salary last year soared 46 per cent to £1.26 million, was upbeat about the figures.

He said: "This excellent operating performance was driven by continued strong

sales, particularly in pharmaceuticals and animal health, where results have been boosted further by the co-marketing efforts of our combined sales forces.

"We are beginning to see cost savings and margin improvements and these cost savings will accelerate as the year progresses."

Analysts at UBS Phillips & Drew are tipping the shares as a "buy" and are predicting full-year pre-tax profits in the region of £870 million, against £724 million in 1989. The shares closed 6p down at 472p.

A first-quarter dividend of 3.4p a share will be paid on July 16. Earnings per share were 10.8p (12.3p), with P&D predicting 43p for the full year.

Island's finance system 'flawed'

THE framework under which the Isle of Man promoted itself as an off-shore finance centre was "seriously flawed," according to a previously secret report released by the Manx government.

The report, compiled by two officials of the Bank of England, was commissioned in the wake of the £42 million collapse of the island's Savings and Investment Bank in 1982.

"The considerable defects of policy have been exacerbated by sloppy day-to-day administration. It is not conducive to a good regulatory image to set rules, then not object when they are clearly being broken," it says.

The report was compiled in 1982 by Mr Richard Farrar and Miss Wendy Hyde — seconded from the Bank of England to investigate banking supervision on the island. Their conclusion in the report to the island's Lieutenant Governor was "that the administration of the Banking Act has been very seriously flawed."

"The system was ill-considered from the start, because it was not designed to set and police safety margins. Either the entry criteria should have been much stiffer, or the follow-up supervision should have been more intense."

The report was made public in response to pressure following the collapse last month of the trial of eight men accused of causing the Savings and Investment Bank's crash.

In releasing the report the Manx Government points out that since 1983 a comprehensive and rigorous system of supervision has been established for the Isle of Man's booming finance sector.

Next week the Tynwald — the Manx parliament — will be asked to approve the setting up of an independent inquiry to look at events leading up to and following the bank's crash.

Depositors will also learn if they are to be compensated by the Manx Government.

Miss Gwendoline Lamb, the woman leading the fight for compensation who lost her life savings of £30,000, said: "There is only one course of action that the Isle of Man Government can take in order to maintain its financial integrity and that is to announce immediately full refunds for every depositor."

COMMENT The Professor tackles the tanks on his lawn

THE laws of British Aerospace are looking more and more like Red Square: tanks as far as the eye can see. Professor Roland Smith, the man who took on Tiny and came out smiling, is meeting the threat with a variety of diversionary tactics. On the day the trade and industry select committee verdict on the Rover "sweeteners" affair — the sale was described as "a good job, badly done" — surfaced by way of a leaked report, British Aerospace made the diversionary move of announcing that it had signed an agreement to study the possibility of developing a second-generation supersonic airliner.

The move, which coincided with the BAE annual meeting, was a nice try, but the word on everybody's lips is still "sweeteners." The Professor points out that since the group acquired Rover, more than half a billion pounds has been committed to new manufacturing capacity, and things are generally looking up. But there was never much doubt that Rover was a fine buy for BAE: in an evening meeting with investment analysts on the day the deal was finally done, BAE made no secret that it had secured a mouth-watering deal. The shares responded accordingly. The investment programme which is turning Rover round will be more than covered by potential property gains.

In the context of the amount of investment required, of the property gains to be made, of the likely turnaround in profits given the culture that was already in the process of change, the amount of the sweeteners was insignificant and hardly worth the political fallout. The Professor may have pushed too hard, but he had his shareholders to consider. His irresistible force needed

to be met with an immovable object rather than industry's flexible friend, Lord Young, the then Trade Secretary.

On another front, the Professor is meeting a seemingly immovable object, Aerospace, controlled by the French Government. BAE and Daimler-Benz, its West German partner in Airbus Industrie, are keen to turn the consortium into a company, a move which does not appeal to the French, apparently on the grounds that companies not only have to be capitalized but also have to publish their accounts.

While the business world in general, and Boeing in particular, would love to see how Airbus is doing, there is more at stake than the satisfaction of outsiders' curiosity. Airbus is now a massive undertaking, and it has arrived at the point where it needs to be managed according to what is best for Airbus, rather than what its partners can agree upon.

Midland balancing act

Mr Gene Lockhart's astronomical progress up Midland's greasy pole speaks volumes for the state of the bank. Not only is he not British, but he is not a banker, having cut his teeth on insurance broking and management consultancy before catching the eye of Sir Kit McMahon. Now Mr Lockhart finds himself in charge of the majority of group operations after barely two years in the place.

The bank argues that his cost-cutting campaign has been reasonably successful, but has been patently unable to pump the extra income through the system to make it worthwhile. He must balance the equation quickly. If he does not, someone from the Hongkong & Shanghai Bank might.

Pipe-line to shoot Frankfurt

A little cheer went up in the City yesterday, not because the Footsie lost nearly 20 points but because Nomura Securities has picked London for its European headquarters. In the grand scheme of things, the decision to locate research, planning, accounting, legal and personnel functions in London rather than Paris may appear small beer, but in the rarified world of Japanese corporate hierarchy, this is a big decision.

London was chosen for a variety of reasons, not the least being that Nomura was already bigger in the City than elsewhere in Europe. It is nevertheless of some comfort that when London is under direct threat from Frankfurt and Paris, it has received the vote of the world's most powerful securities house.

That said, the heat is still being turned up, particularly by the West Germans. Dr Rüdiger von Rosen, executive vice-chairman of the Federation of German

Stock Exchanges, gave the International Stock Exchange, and the US Nasdaq market, food for thought this week with his warning that attempts to muscle in on the German market would be met with a counter-attack on other markets by the German Ibis system.

This should not necessarily be seen as a threat, but as a natural development of the global market. Ibis, like Seag International, like Nasdaq, has the undoubted potential to transact pan-European business, and the choice has to be made as to whether to continue to develop competing systems, or to push the infant Price Information Project Europe (Pipe), funded by the stock exchanges of EC members, to maturity. If London really wishes to stay in front, it should take a lead in the latter, rather than risk being left on the fringes of a Euro-wide system.

David Brewerton

Bear Brand sold by Courtwell

By Philip Pangalos

COURTWELL Group, which recently had its shares suspended at 4p after the appointment of an administrative receiver at its Leisure Investments subsidiary, has sold its Bear Brand hosiery business, which was its only other asset, to the Glamor Group.

Courtwell is now a shell, with some cash as well as some receivables. Dr Edward Vandyk, who became Courtwell's chairman after the departure of Mr Nick Oppenheim, a financier, said: "We will need to ensure we have a clean shell and clarify the position regarding tax losses, which could be in the order of £50 million to £60 million."

Glamor, the leather goods and hosiery supplier which is changing its name to Hartstone Group, acquired Bear Brand for £726,000 in 13 per cent convertible redeemable unsecured loan stock.

The stock can be converted into 409,014 Hartstone ordinary shares, 1.6 per cent of Hartstone, on July 1 next year. The deal will make Glamor number two in the British hosiery market.

After adjusting for the release of about £1.5 million owed to Courtwell, Bear Brand's pre-tax loss for 1989 was £540,000.

Smurfit to seek acquisitions



JEFFERSON Smurfit, the Republic of Ireland's largest company and one of the largest paper, packaging and recycling groups in the world, is ready to hit the acquisition trail in Europe with Ir£848 million (£827 million) cash in

its pocket book (Melinda Wittstock writes). The company said it was looking to pursue a strategy of "logical opportunism."

"The pendulum is heading back to the buyer again, and we've got the cash," said Mr

Dermot Smurfit, the joint deputy chairman (above).

Pre-tax profits rose 3.9 per cent to Ir£246 million and earnings per share climbed 8.5 per cent to Ir51p. The shares jumped 13p to 643p. *Times, page 26*

The Guinness trial

Saunders 'confirmed £5m success fee'

By A Correspondent

ERNEST Saunders, the former Guinness chief executive, clearly split out the benefits to the Heron Group for supporting the company in its bid for Distillers, a court was told.

Gerald Ronson, Heron's chairman and chief executive, said he was paid a £5 million success fee and £800,000 to cover losses after investing £25 million to help protect the Guinness share price.

In transcripts of his 1987 interviews with Department of Trade inspectors examining

the bid, read to the jury at Southwark Crown Court, he said he was first approached in January 1986 by Anthony Parnes, a broker, who told him it would be helpful if Heron bought Guinness stock to protect its value against selling of stock on the market.

Mr Ronson asked about losses and Mr Parnes confirmed they would be covered by Guinness. He said he had read of the bid in the press and that Distillers were covering the costs of Guinness so he did not think there was anything wrong in being indemnified.

Later Mr Saunders confirmed any losses would be made good by the company. Heron invested £10 million, but during the bid raised its stake to £25 million. Mr Ronson told the DTI he was asked by Mr Parnes to increase the stake.

He said he told Mr Parnes: "Before we go that far, what happens if you are successful in taking over the company. It's very good, we are putting in this money and we are covered, but everyone else is making big fees." He told the inspectors: "I think I said to him 'what do you think would

be a fair fee?' And I think he came back to me and said 20 per cent of the money we were putting up." Mr Ronson told the broker he wanted it confirmed by Mr Saunders.

Mr Ronson said Mr Saunders confirmed Heron would receive cover on losses and a success fee based on 20 per cent of the investment.

Mr Saunders, aged 54, Mr Ronson, aged 50, Mr Parnes, aged 44, and Sir Jack Lyons, aged 74, deny 24 charges of theft, false accounting and breaches of the Companies Act. The trial continues.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Laing takes the biscuit

A 20-PAGE leaflet written by United Biscuits chairman Sir Hector Laing, ever his own man, has been causing something of a stir at the firm's Osterley, Middlesex, headquarters. The leaflet is a personal reflection on his 45 years with the company, since he will be retiring — and becoming life president — at UB's annual meeting today. But given Sir Hector's well known and vocal dislike of much in the Square Mile, some of his colleagues are apparently reluctant to let the leaflet go on general release. At least City professionals take offence. For in it he writes: "The stock market is coming to be less a means of allocating capital to productive use than an end unto itself — a computer game for those who compete in the finance league. But it is an eroding game, which undermines the true value of the counters with which it is being played — the national industrial and commercial base." Those same City professionals can, however, hardly object to the 17.5 per cent average annual growth in UB's share price since Sir Hector became managing director in 1964. In short, that means that £1,000 invested then, with gross dividends reinvested, would be worth £54,420 today.

Plus ça change

PRESS relations have come a long way in the 21 years since the Wincott Foundation was established to make awards for excellence in the business

and financial press. At yesterday's "coming of age" awards ceremony, the Governor of the Bank of England, Robin Leigh Pemberton recalled that the first press adviser to the Old Lady was not even on the payroll, but paid covertly by one of the directors, who was quietly reimbursed. Even when the first press officer was put on staff, his brief was to "keep the Bank of England out of the press, and the press out of the Bank of England."

Index fingered

OFFENDING the Scottish investment community can be a grave mistake indeed, as many a fallen business hero will vouch. And there has been veritable steam coming out of Scottish ears this week after a quote in the *Financial Times* — attributed to Paul Whitney, managing director of British Coal pension funds, appertaining to the continuing bid for Globe — had done the rounds in Edinburgh's Charlotte Square. Whitney's claim that "the potential virtues of

index trusts had ironically been praised in a recent investment trust review from County NatWest WoodMac" — "ironic" since County is defending Globe — has outraged one of the authors of County's annual investment trust review, Robin Angus. Accusing Whitney of "betraying a considerable selectivity of quotation," Angus says that his personal view, as published in County's Investment Trust Review of 1988 (published in February 1989) remains that: "As for indexation, it is the ultimate cop-out. Indexing one's portfolio for fear of underperforming is like castrating oneself for fear of getting Aids."

● TALK about appropriate names... staff in the Bath Street, Glasgow, office of BP Exploration, has received a memo from office manager Allan Abbot Anderson about the disappearance of a number of toilet rolls from the third floor lavatory. Given that none of the cardboard inner tubes are ever found, he can only assume that they have been stolen. And to investigate this alarming state of affairs he has appointed a Mr Lien.

Whole in two

CREDIT Lyonnais Securities, the international division of the firm which also encompasses Laing & Cruickshank, has poached the two men who were running Bankers Trust's South-east Asia department — Jonathan Compton, aged 37, and Australian Gary Williams, aged 41. Compton, who started his new job as MD of CL's Far Eastern desk this

week, says their task will be "to bring the whole thing together." "When it comes to non-Japan Pacific equities, CL has been a very Hong Kong-centric firm and that is no longer good enough. You have to cover the whole region because most clients don't just want to be invested in one country, they want to invest in the region as a whole." Compton and Williams worked for two years at Bankers Trust but have known each other for 10. "Ever since I was an investment manager in Hong Kong and Gary was my broker," says Compton.

● ONLY from California — mineral water for pets. A company called Thirsty Pup is marketing the specially-bottled water at \$1.19 a gallon and manager Michael Angelo says: "Customers say 'I won't drink tap water so why should my pet?'"

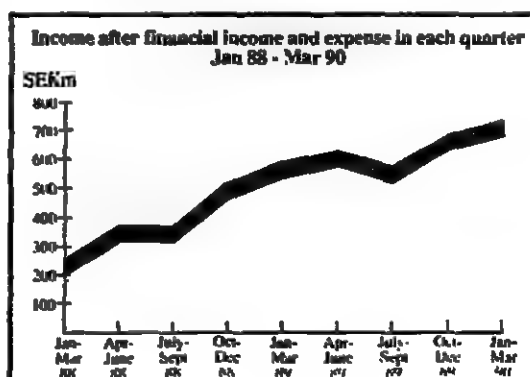
Take-off meals

FOR those of you who have not notched up enough air miles already... Japan Airlines is offering an alternative to in-flight food — no-flight food. It has just opened a restaurant in Osaka, the interior of which is a replica of a JAL Boeing 767, complete with cabin crew, video tapes of travel information and seats available in either executive or first-class sections. "We are aiming the restaurant at people who maybe don't travel very much, but want to try out the experience," quipped an airline spokesman. Surely stating the obvious....

Carol Leonard

SKF First Quarter 1990

SKF profits continue to increase



January - March 1990		Increase		Swedish Kronor	Sterling equivalent
Income after financial income and expense		22%		721m	70m
Earnings per share		7%		3.70	36p
Sales		13%		7,112m	695m
Requires unaudited company statement to 20.7%					

In line with the Company's declared long term strategy of continued expansion through acquisition, SKF has already made two major investments in 1990. Cofler, the Italian tool company

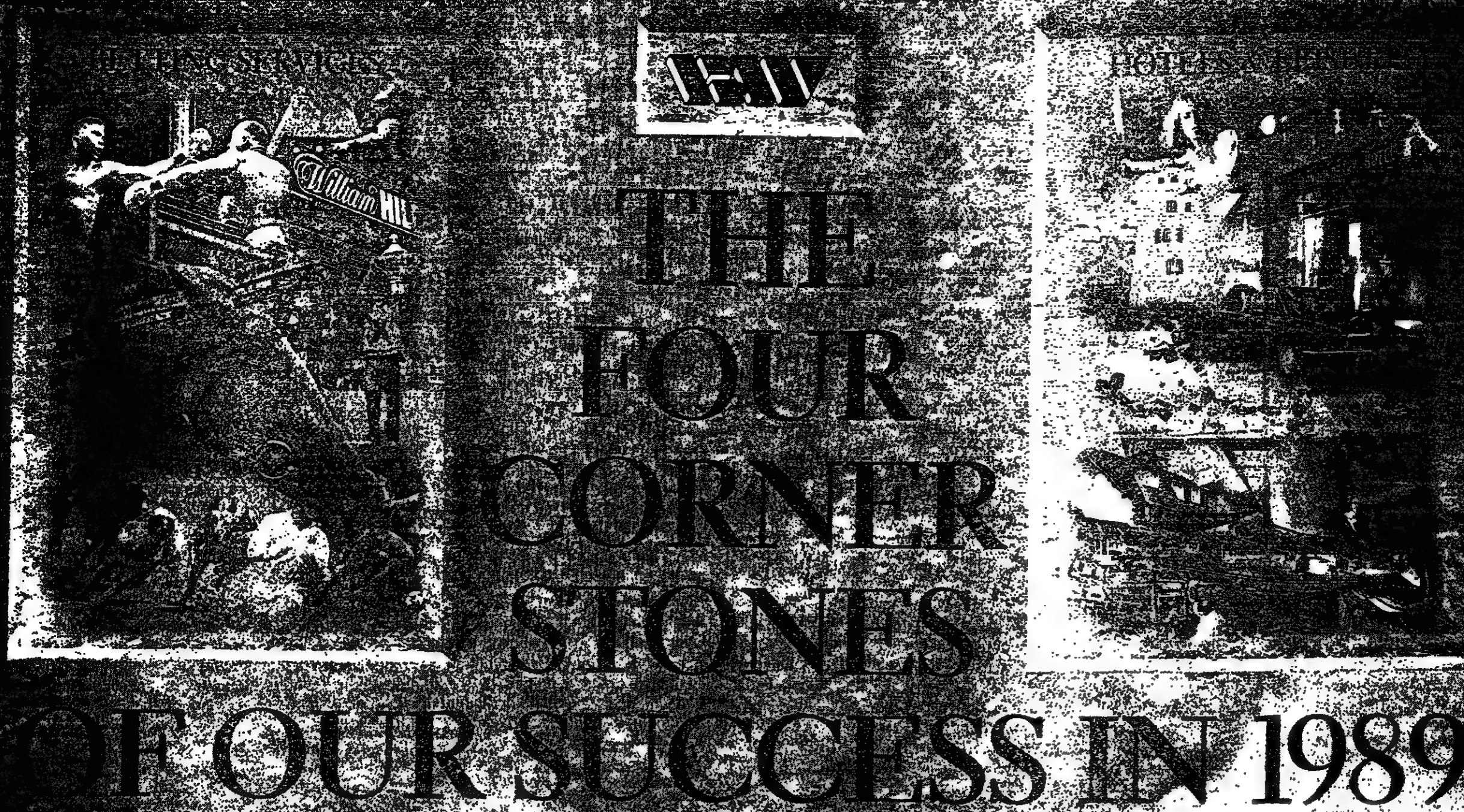
and Chicago Rawhide, a major US seal manufacturer, has given SKF a stronger position in each of their specialist markets.

For a copy of the 1989 Annual Report, please contact SKF Group Public Affairs S-415 50, Göteborg Sweden. Tel +46 (31) 371000

Average rate of exchange for 1988: 1 GBP = 10.86 SEK; 1989: 1 GBP = 10.54 SEK; Jan-Mar 1990: 1 GBP = 10.23 SEK.

AB SKF

SKF



THE FOUR CORNER STONES OF OUR SUCCESS IN 1989

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 1989 (unaudited)

	1989 £M	1988 £M	%CHANGE
Turnover	526.0	128.9	+308%
Profit before tax	82.2	41.7	+97%
Earnings per ordinary share <small>(fully diluted)</small>	88.7p	41.05p	+116%
Dividend per ordinary share	15p	11p	+36.4%
Shareholders funds	856.0	603.6	+41.8%

Once again it is my pleasure to be able to report to you on a year of record results and one which also saw a substantial expansion of the Group's activities. The most significant feature of 1989 was the increase we made in the bookmaking business by the investment in William Hill to add to Brent Walker Bookmakers to become one of our four core businesses of Pubs and Brewing, Hotels and Leisure, Leisure Developments and Betting Services. Each of these businesses is individually managed by its own board and is independently accountable to the Group for its performance and development.

We now have a well-balanced group of activities and have enjoyed another record year during a period of major expansion. We are, however, never complacent and strive continually to improve both the asset base and profitability of our company. We seek to do this by the rationalization of our existing activities, a carefully planned programme of acquisitions and disposals and by seizing opportunities to develop our core businesses.

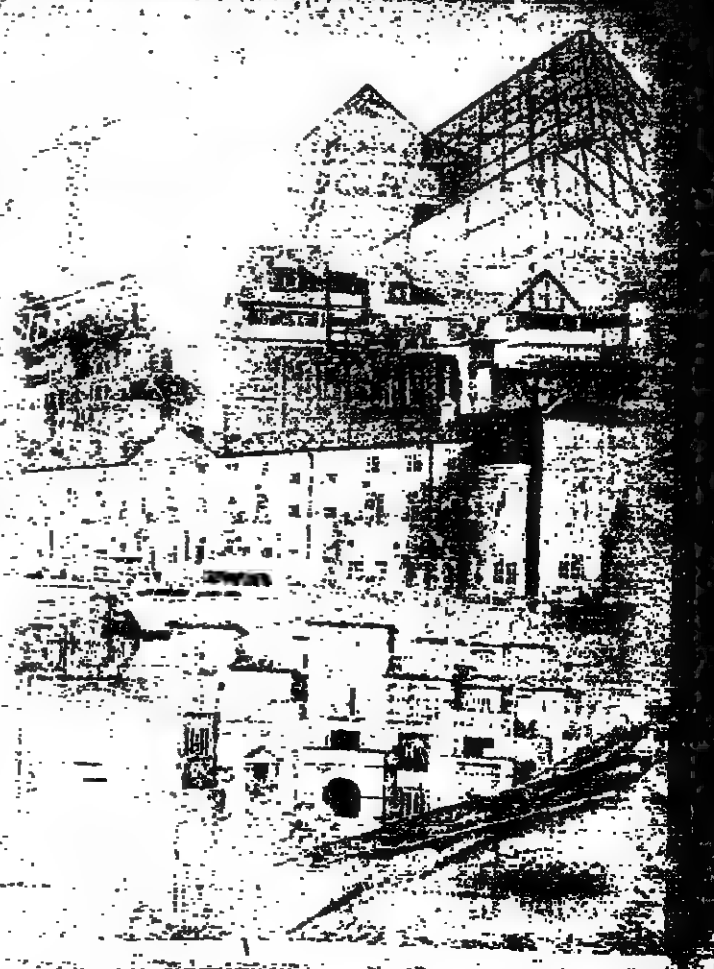
Whilst companies in a very narrow range of sectors have suffered considerably from the downturn in the economic climate, our diversified base of activities has protected us from most of these problems. A substantial proportion of our business is in Pubs, Brewing and Betting Services and these activities generally show a strong resistance to reductions in consumer spending. I am pleased to report that the company has started well and we look forward with confidence.

Chairman & Chief Executive

Full details of the company's activities are recorded in the annual report and accounts which will be available from The Company Secretary, The Brent Walker Group PLC, Brent Walker House, 100, Pall Mall Street, London W1P 7PS.

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edge up
to £15.2m

VW sets Euro
record by selling
2.94m vehicles

American steps
in Midland shuff

Inflation to hit 10%

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Profits at Telfos edge up to £15.2m

By Wolfgang Münchau

Telfos Holdings, the engineering group, suffered a fall in earnings per share from 22.5p to 15.2p last year. Pre-tax profits were up marginally, from £5.16 million to £5.26 million.

The company also reported an extraordinary charge of £3.9 million, which is mainly a result of the £4.7 million costs involved in the closure of Security, a subsidiary specialising in security door entry systems and furniture retailing.

Telfos sought buyers for the company, but when this failed the loss-making security business was sold to its management for a nominal sum.

Telfos shares fell by 12p to close at 173p. The final dividend is 6.4p, making a total of 10p (8p).

The company said it will now concentrate on its core businesses in the raising and mining equipment sectors.

Last August, it became the first Western firm to take control of a Hungarian company, when it acquired a 51 per cent stake in Ganz-Hunslet, the national manufacturer of railway rolling stock. There was no contribution from this business in 1989, although Telfos believes there will be substantial profits in future years.

Bid success would place bank's main assets in US

AIB rises 52% to £229m

By Neil Beckett
Banking Correspondent

ALLIED Irish Banks raised pre-tax profits by 52 per cent to £229 million (£229 million) in the year to end-March, in line with its forecast, despite an £41 million Latin American debt write-off and an £5.6 million provision against local authority swaps.

Earnings per share rose 39 per cent to 124.4p after the effects of the rights issue in 1988. The bank is raising its final dividend to 14.25p, making a total of 17.5p, up 22 per cent.

Last week, AIB announced a \$224 million bid for Baltimore Bancorp, to consolidate First Maryland, its existing US bank. It is holding an £162 million rights issue to finance the acquisition. The bank is waiting for a formal reply from Baltimore's board, expected to come at the annual meeting next week.

Much of AIB's growth came from its home base, where the bank still controls more than 40 per cent of the market, like its traditional rival, the Bank of Ireland. Pre-tax profits in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland grew by 33 per cent, boosted by the strong growth in the local economy.

The two countries still bring in 44 per cent of AIB's profits, but if the bid for Baltimore succeeds, the largest part of the group's assets will be in the



Strategy stand: Paddy Dowling (right) and Roy Douglas, UK group general manager

US. First Maryland has been one of the more successful acquisitions of a US bank by a European group, with 20 per cent compound earnings growth in the last five years.

AIB's shares slumped after the announcement of the cash call, the second in 18 months. However, Mr Paddy Dowling, the deputy chief executive, said the bank was committed to its strategy. In

Britain, AIB continues to try to develop a niche bank, targeting smaller companies and professional practices.

It has 60 offices and wants to acquire a medium-sized building society to extend its branch network further.

The Latin American debt provision increases the bank's cover on Third World loans to 70 per cent. The write-off on local authority interest-rate

swap deals has arisen after the English Court of Appeal ruled that some contracts were beyond local authority powers and were invalid.

The bank's total assets grew 8 per cent to £15.9 billion in the year.

The advance was held back, however, by the strength of the Irish punt. Growth in the underlying currencies was 16 per cent.

Crystalate falls into red at half time

By Our City Staff

CRYSTALATE Holdings, the electronic components group where Lord Jenkin of Roding, the former Secretary of State for the Environment, is chairman, incurred a pre-tax loss of £297,000 in the half year to end-March, against profits of £2.29 million last time.

As a gesture of confidence, the interim dividend of 2.2p is maintained. Crystalate faces a hostile £32.5 million bid from TT Group, but last week, Vishay Intertechnology of Pennsylvania, one of its US suppliers, said it was considering a counter-bid and would give its decision by May 28. By then, Crystalate will have to release all information relevant to its defence.

Lord Jenkin said his board was seeking clarification of the Americans' intentions. Meanwhile, shareholders should take no action over any documents released by Vishay.

The shares fell 2p to 80p on the interim figures, against an equivalent of 84p available in new shares from TT.

Crystalate saw just £31,000 of operating profits during the first half, and a £225,000 profit from the disposal of property was wiped out by interest charges 46 per cent higher at £1.15 million. The sale of the telecommunications division is complete.

Bank study backs use of interest rates on spending

By Colin Narbrough, Economics Correspondent

FEARS that deregulation and innovation in financial markets over the past decade have blunted interest rates as a counter-inflationary weapon are wholly unfounded, according to the Bank of England's latest *Quarterly Bulletin*.

Indeed, its study of how interest rate changes transmit to the economy concludes that monetary policy now has a greater impact on spending in Britain than in the past.

"The overall conclusion is that a rise in interest rates should currently have greater effect in reducing aggregate demand than previously," it says.

The findings back the Government's stance that interest rates are the right tool for curbing demand, and thereby inflation — a position widely attacked as a "one-club policy."

But while the Bank sees higher rates having more impact, entailing greater downward pressure on inflation, it believes a number of current factors, such as labour market tightness and wage pressures arising from the effect of mortgage rates on inflation, might limit the impact.

"In these circumstances, a fall in profit margins may be relatively more important," it suggests, also acknowledging

evidence of a "powerful link" between a stronger exchange rate and lower inflation.

The Bank concludes that the channels by which interest rates influence aggregate demand and inflation are now more clearly discernible than before.

The study, released ahead of today's publication of the bulletin, finds that examination of major overseas markets provided "little firm evidence" of any radical change in the way monetary policy influences the components of aggregate demand.

The initial impact of deregulation and structural change in the 1980s is seen to have reduced the effect of interest rates in Britain as borrowing became easier, but the availability and lower cost of credit boosted both sides of the personal sector's balance sheet.

The expansion of personal sector gross debt has taken it from being a net creditor to a net debtor on floating rate terms, making households more sensitive to interest rates, especially mortgage rates.

The study considers it likely the personal sector will be less able to maintain expenditure in the face of an increase in debt service costs.

VW sets Europe record by selling 2.94m vehicles

By Wolfgang Münchau
European Business Correspondent

VOLKSWAGEN has consolidated its position as Europe's largest car maker with a rise in car sales to 2.94 million last year, the highest ever recorded by a European producer.

During the past year, the company, which has been struggling to improve its margins, succeeded in increasing pre-tax profits by 33 per cent to just over DM1 billion (£372 million) for the first time in its history.

The rise in profitability came as a result of improved sales and a cost-cutting programme, which began two years ago and included the shedding of 1,500 jobs last year.

Turnover was up from DM59.2 billion to DM65.4 billion. Despite an improvement in operating margins from 3.6 per cent to 4.6 per cent, Volkswagen still lags behind some of its main European rivals, in particular Fiat, in terms of profitability. The dividend on ordinary

shares was raised from DM10 to DM11. The preference share dividend went up from DM11 to DM12.

The turnaround in the company's fortunes continued during the first quarter this year, although current-year profits may be depressed by falling earnings from VW's Brazilian subsidiary, which is suffering from the consequences of the tough economic policies by the recently installed government.

Later this year, Volkswagen is planning to start producing its new range of Polo cars in East Germany as part of a planned DM5 billion investment programme over the next five years.

VW has also formed a joint venture with VEB IFA-Kombinat Personenwagen, the official East German producer of Trabant and Wartburg cars. VW is also the front-runner to win a co-operation agreement with Skoda of Czechoslovakia.

American steps up in Midland shuffle

By Our Banking Correspondent

MIDLAND Bank has shaken up its boardroom in an effort to speed its reorganization and combat falling profits. An American, Mr Gene Lockhart, becomes head of both group operations and the retail bank. It is rare for a foreigner to be given control of a high street bank's core business.

Mr Lockhart was previously chief executive of Midland's group operations division, and was responsible for reorganizing the entire back office operations. He replaces Mr Michael Fuller, the present chief executive of retail banking, who is retiring early after 41 years at the bank.

Mr Lockhart came to the bank in 1987 from First Management Consultants in New York.

His appointment was one of Sir Kit McMahon's first

moves as chairman.

He has hived off much of the retail bank's paperwork into 13 district service centres, allowing staff to spend more time with customers, and led similar changes in the securities business.

Despite this, Midland's costs have remained high with a cost to income ratio of 72.4 per cent last year, by far the highest of the main banks. Since then, Sir Kit has warned that profits are running "well below" last year's, threatening to raise the ratio even higher.

A spokesman said: "Mr Lockhart will be in an even stronger position to drive through cost savings." He will be assisted by Mr Rodney Baker-Bates and Mr Ronald Price, appointed managing directors of UK banking and operations respectively.

Inflation 'to hit 10%'

By Our Economics Correspondent

THE annual inflation rate will average 9.1 per cent this year, after peaking at 10 per cent in August, but will only show 9.5 per cent in the April data due on Friday, Schroders predicts in its weekly forecast. The City consensus for 1990 is 8.5 per cent.

Mr Keith Wade, Schroders chief economist, believes the impact of a 10 per cent

devaluation of the green pound may have been underestimated, and will exert upward pressure on inflation towards the end of the year, as will the uniform business rate.

He fears that private sector pay negotiators are holding back until the April figure is out, while local authority claims have still to be submitted.

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TEES/SIDE

Initiative Talent Ability

US insur
not exce

Deficit of
£170m at
NZ group

She
pro

US insurance profits are not excessive, judge says

From Philip Robinson, Los Angeles

CALIFORNIA'S 17 million motorists can virtually say goodbye to any significant rebates they expected on car insurance as a result of reforms which became law last year.

The 4,000 insurance companies operating in the state, including Commercial Union, Royal and General Accident, had braced themselves for costs in rebates of between \$800 million and \$1 billion.

But Judge William Fernandez, of San Francisco, has delivered a 27-page opinion setting out a fair rate of return for insurance companies and effectively concluding they have not made excessive profits. If his ruling stands, there will be no reason for the companies to offer rebates.

Judge Fernandez has been

criticized for having an alleged conflict of interest over the issue by Mr John K Van de Kamp, the Californian Attorney General. Mr Van de Kamp wanted the judge taken off the case because his wife, Judith, works for a law firm which advises insurance companies. However, Judge Fernandez has had the support of Miss Roxanne Gillespie, the Californian Insurance Commissioner, who has to rule on whether she will accept his findings. Her guidelines on fair rates of return are six months late.

Judge Fernandez says insurance companies in California may earn a rate of return of between 11.2 and 19 per cent. The insurance companies had been seeking between 16 and 21 per cent; the

insurance department wanted a fixed figure of 11.2 per cent. Judge Fernandez's findings have been welcomed by the insurance industry and are seen by some as a second blow to insurance reforms known as Proposition 103. This was designed to take insurance rates back to levels prevailing in November 1987 and then cut them by 20 per cent.

Consumer groups which inspired the legislation two years ago have condemned the findings as a farce. Mr Harvey Rosenfield, the Los Angeles consumer activist and author of Proposition 103, said it was as though the electorate had never cast their votes.

Mr Van de Kamp said that, under some accounting methods, Judge Fernandez's recommendations could give

insurance companies a profit margin of 35 per cent on some of their business. The judge recommended that when calculating a fair return, contributions to political organizations, lobby groups and charities ought to be excluded. But the salaries of the companies' executives ought to be counted as an expense.

According to the insurance department, companies have been making an average annual return of 11.2 per cent over the past 15 years—in line or lower than recommendations from Judge Fernandez.

Last week, a Los Angeles judge swept aside other parts of Proposition 103 by telling insurance companies that they may continue setting premiums by post code, age, sex and marital status.

Deficit of £170m at NZ group

ANZCORP, the New Zealand-based financial services group, which earlier announced that it lost NZ\$374.3 million (£25.6 million) in the six months to December 31, showed a deficit on shareholders' funds of NZ\$494.0 million (£170.3 million) on December 31 against NZ\$419.8 million at June 30.

Chase, whose property arm was placed under statutory management last year, provided no comparison with the 1988 period in its statement, which failed to meet Stock Exchange requirements.

It notched up New Zealand's largest-ever corporate loss in the year to June 30 with a group loss of NZ\$841.4 million.

Chase sold NZ\$195 million of property in the six months. It has operated under an informal moratorium and hopes to have a High Court scheme of arrangement in place by July, Chase said. It is clear from its balance sheet that unsecured creditors will receive only a small payout.

It said: "It follows that the shares and options of Chase Corporation listed... have no value." (Reuters)

Shorter runs hit profits at Titon

By Philip Pangalos

PRE-TAX profits at Titon Holdings, the Unlisted Securities Market window ventilator maker, fell 8.8 per cent to £706,000 in the six months to end-March, while turnover climbed by 9.3 per cent to £4.83 million.

Mr Peter Farrar, the chief executive, said the downturn in profits is due to a more competitive market, with some margin pressure, and less efficient manufacturing due to shorter production runs.

He added that although business is up by 9 per cent, demand is for shorter runs with more smaller orders.

Earnings per share are reduced from 4.69p to 4.23p, but the interim dividend is raised from 0.94p to 1.03p.

Mr John Anderson, the chairman, said that, despite the difficult trading conditions, the company has improved its market position.

He said the increase in sales volume came mainly from non-ventilation products—this is seen as good news for the company with the ventilation market yet to show its full



Farrar: margin pressure

potential. The company should benefit from changes in building regulations, which came into effect from the beginning of April and specify background ventilation in all habitable rooms, although the slowdown in new building has resulted in a delay in the expected increase in ventilator sales. Domestic ventilation accounts for about 60 per cent of the group's business.

Titon has launched its Trimvent 4000 range of ventilators, ready for the change in regulations. The shares eased by 5p to 80p.

Rentokil expands overseas

By Our City Staff

RENTOKIL Group, the environmental and property services group, is making a series of purchases in the US, Australia and Canada for a total of £1.68 million.

In the US, Tropical Plant Rentals, the group's American subsidiary, has paid £470,000 for Maxine Interior Plant-care of Milwaukee, a market leader in tropical plant rental and maintenance.

In Australia, the company has acquired Everglades Indoor Plant Hire Services in Sydney for £340,000. It will be integrated into the Green Fingers garden centre business bought by Rentokil two years ago.

Rentokil is also taking over Jungles Interior Display Plants in Adelaide for £520,000. It will form the basis of an Adelaide tropical plant rental operation to parallel that in Sydney. Acquisitions are expected to accelerate its growth.

Rentokil (Canada) has acquired Pest Prevention Services for £350,000. This will form the basis of a pest control branch at Burlington, Ontario.

Far East competition squeezes watches group

Profits run slow at Time Products

By Gillian Sawditch

TIME Products, the Sekonda watch group, is being squeezed in the Far East. Japanese competition and price-cutting in Hong Kong hit pre-tax profits for the year to January 1989 and they fell from £17.3 million to £15.1 million.

Sales rose from £62 million to £68.2 million but earnings per share fell from 24p to 20.6p. The final dividend is 4.5p making 7p for the year up from 6.5p.

British profits rose from £9.2 million to £9.7 million but profits from Hong Kong fell from £5.92 million to £1.95 million.

Mr Marcus Margulies, managing director of Time Products, said: "The major suppliers of watch movements to Hong Kong are the leading Japanese producers who increased production and reduced their prices considerably during the year. At this stage there is little indication that prices will rise. In the short term, therefore profitability will remain depressed."

In Britain, Sekonda increased its market share and had a satisfactory year. Three new sub-brands of Sekonda were launched last year, the Safari collection, the Soviet collection and the Airborne range. Subbs, a new prestige brand, with prices in the £35 to £65 range, was also launched last year.

Since the year-end, Time has won the distribution agency for Certina watches in Britain, which Mr Margulies says is an expensive brand by



Price movement: Time Products' Marcus Margulies

British standards with prices at about £120. The average watch price in Britain is £20 but he says that other nationalities, for example, the Italians, are more likely to spend £200 on a watch.

The luxury watch division had a good year with sales and profits significantly ahead.

Blancpain and Girard Perregaux did particularly well in North America.

The group has entered a joint venture with the Soviet watch industry, which Mr Margulies says should bring significant benefits in the long term. Shares in Time Products rose 3p to 157p.

Airlines plan tie with DHL

From Joe Joseph Tokyo

DHL, the world-wide courier service, is negotiating a tie-up with Japan Air Lines, Lufthansa and a big Japanese trading group in a deal that will eventually give the three suitors control.

By adding a sophisticated network of Asian and European air routes to DHL's network, the deal will heat up the already intense competition between DHL and Federal Express and United Parcel Service, DHL's two biggest American rivals.

A spokesman for JAL would only say: "We are studying a proposal to invest in DHL, but no final decision has been reached."

However, Nihon Keizai Shimbun, Japan's leading financial daily, said a deal, committing JAL, Lufthansa and Nissho Iwai to investing \$500 million in DHL by 1992, could be reached this month.

The report said JAL and Lufthansa would take initial stakes of 5 per cent each, and Nissho Iwai an initial stake of 2.5 per cent, in DHL's Asian and European operations.

By 1992, to coincide with the single European market, JAL, Lufthansa and Nissho Iwai will own 60 per cent of DHL's Asian and European operations between them. By then, the three companies also plan to have acquired 20 per cent of DHL's American operations, the newspaper said.

DHL is privately owned by the handful of investors who started it 21 years ago. They want to increase DHL's muscle and realize some of their capital gains.

JAL has been particularly keen to raise its profile in the American freight business. It has air cargo services to main airports and uses local trucking companies from them. But JAL feels that its present network will not cope with the increasing competition.

JAL's strong presence in Asia and Lufthansa's in Europe will give DHL both an impressive world-wide reach and access to the airlines' information systems.

Cakebread falls

Pre-tax profits at Cakebread Robey & Co, the Enfield builders' and timber merchant, slumped from £946,000 to £74,000 in the year to end-December. Turnover slipped from £26.4 million to £24.9 million. Earnings per share fell from 10.4p to 5.5p. The final dividend is reduced to 1.9p (3.3p), making 2.7p (4.1p).

Mandarin Oriental International Limited

Incorporated in Bermuda with limited liability

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Members of Mandarin Oriental International Limited will be held at the Connaught Rooms of Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong on Monday, 4th June 1990 at noon for the following purposes:

- 1 To receive and consider the Statement of Accounts and the Reports of the Directors and Auditors for the year ended 31st December 1989
- 2 To declare a final dividend
- 3 To re-elect Directors
- 4 To appoint Auditors and to authorise the Directors to fix their remuneration
- 5 To consider and, if thought fit, adopt with or without amendments, the following Ordinary Resolution: That

a) the exercise by the Directors during the Relevant Period of all powers of the Company to allot or issue shares and to make and grant offers, agreements and options which would or might require shares to be allotted or be issued and is hereby generally and unconditionally approved;

b) the approval in paragraph a) shall authorise the Directors during the Relevant Period to make and grant offers, agreements and options which would or might require shares to be allotted, issued or disposed of after the end of the Relevant Period;

c) the aggregate nominal amount of share capital allotted or agreed conditionally or unconditionally to be allotted (whether pursuant to an option or otherwise) by the Directors pursuant to the approval in paragraph a), otherwise than pursuant to a Rights Issue, or the issue of shares pursuant to the Mandarin Oriental Employee Share Purchase Trust, shall not exceed 10% of the aggregate nominal amount of the issued share capital of the Company and the said approval shall be limited accordingly;

d) for the purposes of this Resolution

"Relevant Period" means the period from the passing of this Resolution until whichever is the earlier of

- (i) the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting of the Company; and
- (ii) the expiration of the period within which the next Annual General Meeting of the Company is required by law to be held;

"Rights Issue" means an offer of shares open for a period fixed by the Directors to holders of shares on the register on a fixed record date in proportion to their then holdings of such shares (subject to such exclusions or other arrangements as the Directors may deem necessary or expedient in relation to fractional entitlements or legal or practical problems under the laws of, or the requirements of any recognised regulatory body or any stock exchange in, any territory including, without limitation, arrangements relating to the disposal of shares which, by reason of such exclusions or arrangements, are not allotted to the shareholders who would otherwise have been entitled thereto).

By Order of the Board
RC KWOK Company Secretary

Hong Kong, 9th May 1990

1 A Member entitled to attend and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy or proxies to attend and, on a poll, vote instead of him: a proxy need not also be a Member of the Company. Completion and return of the proxy will not preclude a Member from attending and voting in person.

2 The Register of Members will be closed from 21st May to 25th May 1990 inclusive, to verify those shareholders entitled to the proposed final dividend of HK\$0.28 per share which will be payable on 11th June 1990 to those shareholders registered on 25th May 1990.



MANDARIN ORIENTAL
THE HOTEL GROUP



"As we enter the 1990s, our objective of continuing to generate superior performance is encouraged by our excellent results for the past year."

Gerry Scanlan
Group Chief Executive

First Class Service brings record results

- AIB achieves record pre-tax profits of stg £229m – 52% up on last year
- Total assets increased to stg £15.4 billion
- EPS up 39% to stg 23.6p
- Final dividend of stg 4.10p, giving stg 7.24p for the year
- Britain – strong performance – profits up 23%
- First Maryland Bancorp – 25% annual compound growth in profits for past 6 years

Allied Irish Banks plc

If you would like to receive a copy of the Group report and accounts, available from 12 June, please write to Group Librarian at AIB Bank, Bankcentre, Belmont Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex or telephone 0895 72222.

FHF says apathy is cause of demise

By Michael Clark
Stock Market
Correspondent

FHF Market-Makers, a small firm of market-makers based in the Midlands, has become the latest casualty of the dramatic fall in turnover on the stock market in the wake of the 1987 crash.

The company said it had decided to cease trading as from the close of business on Tuesday, but it emphasized that all agreements would be settled in the ordinary way.

Mr Bob Watson, a director of FHF, blamed the decision on apathy among investors towards the equity market. He said: "It really was a case of lack of interest in the stocks we dealt in. We specialized mainly in third-line engineering companies related to the Midlands industrial area."

FHF dealt in about 150 issues, including a dozen alpha stocks and 60 beta stocks. The remainder of the list was made up of gamma stocks.

Mr Watson added: "Since the crash, most of the business has been done in the top 100 companies, or Alpha stocks. There is little interest in the smaller companies, and when there is, it is all one way - selling."

It is estimated that turnover levels among some trading houses have fallen by as much as 50 per cent in the past year, leading to renewed fears of another round of job losses in the securities industry.

A number of firms are struggling to generate the business needed to meet rising overheads.

Mr Watson said that regional market-makers were more vulnerable to the slide in equity turnover levels than many of the regional trading firms. The latter, he added, had managed to keep ticking over helped by their specialist knowledge of the region within which they operate and the corporate, institutional and private client business they had managed to build up in better times.

FHF was formed four years ago by a group of dealers after their local market-making firm was swallowed up in the run-up to Big Bang by UBS Phillips & Drew, the leading securities house.

Mr Watson said: "We saw a hole and decided that we could fill it."

Cheque costs checked

WHEN a building society bounced a customer's £10 cheque and charged him £5 he felt hard done by. But a Family Money survey shows that he got off lightly. It can

cost £15 for a bank or building society to refer a cheque to the drawer. Also under review on Saturday are store cards, the cost of cancelling a holiday and the level of protection afforded offshore investors.

THE TIMES
ON SATURDAY
IN COLOUR

Copies of the 1989 Annual Report can be obtained from: AMEV (UK) Limited, 1 Houndwell Place, Southampton SO9 1NY. Telephone: 0703 637411

Monopolies inquiry knocks shares in car distributors

SHARES in Britain's motor distributors and component suppliers were thrown into disarray by the news that the Monopolies and Mergers Commission is launching an inquiry into the pricing of new cars.

The MMC has been given the task of finding out why car prices are higher in this country than in the rest of Europe. The investigation is expected to last 15 months and will also look at the supply of replacement parts.

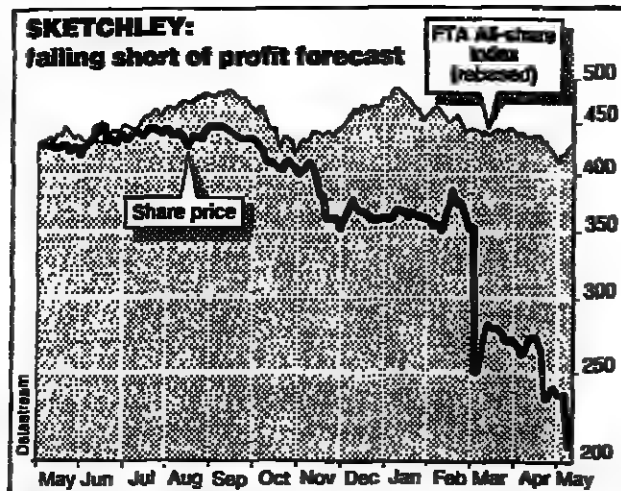
Falls were seen in distributors such as T Cowie, 5p to 34p, Appleyard Group, 4p to 111p, Caffyns, 8p to 510p, Evans Halsey, 3p to 185p, Frank G Gates, 3p to 92p, Gowlings, 2p to 113p, Lex Service, 6p to 235p, Lookers, 3p to 107p, Pendragon, 4p to 111p, Perry Group, 5p to 143p, Quicks, 3p to 113p and Trimoco, 4p to 17p.

Companies supplying car components also failed to escape the mark-down. With losses reported at Kwik-Fit, 2p to 64p, GKN, 6p to 395p, after 394p, BBA Group, 2p to 152p, and Lucas Industries, 4p to 614p. British Aerospace, which owns Rover, lost 7p to 502p, worried additionally by the deepening political row about its acquisition of Rover and the prospect of a further cut in defence spending which also left VSEL 13p lower at 277p.

The rest of the equity market showed signs of boiling over after its recent rally which has seen it climb by more than 100 points since reaching its low for the year last week. The FT-SE 100 index was 19.3 down at 2,162.7 as Wall Street opened higher. The FT index of 30 shares also fell 14.5 to 1,695.6 on a turnover of 425.8 million.

Government securities achieved early gains of 2/4, drawing strength from the overnight auction of short-dated bonds in New York. But they eventually reversed the rises ahead of the second round which started last night.

Heywood Williams continued to benefit from last week's



£96 million acquisition of Solaglas by Saint-Gobain, adding 1p to 268p - a rise on the account so far of 34p. Market men believe that the Solaglas takeover puts a high price on Heywood, Rival Pilkington, Britain's biggest glass manufacturer, slipped 5p to 186p but analysts expect its annual figures next month to show pre-tax profits up from £325 million to £340 million.

Sketchley, the dry cleaning and office services group, which last month saw its unwanted £97 million bid

from the Compass Group lapse, tumbled 30p to 206p after the new management team of Mr John Richardson and Mr Tony Bloom issued a warning that it was unlikely to meet the profits forecast made as part of its defence.

Anglo-Park Group, the property developer, was unchanged at 45p despite a buy recommendation from Société Générale Strauss Turbulla, the broker, "excellent value" and an exceptional yield of 14.8 per cent. Future profits are secure and it is forecasting rapid growth as the market picks up.

Britton Estate slipped 1p to 162p although Royal Insurance has increased its stake to 15.2 per cent. Hamamers ordinary fell 6p to 738p and the A 5p to 714p. The Australian Provident Mutual Society, which last year bought Pearl Assurance, now owns 7.23 per cent of the ordinary and 9.73 per cent of the A.

McCarthy & Stone, the sheltered accommodation group, was a nervous market ahead of interim figures to be published tomorrow, finishing 3p lower at 39p.

Reuters, the international news agency and financial information group, fell 15p to £11.04.

Michael Clark

RECENT ISSUES

EQUITIES

RIGHTS ISSUES

WORLD MARKET INDICES

THE TIMES

STOCK WATCH

ALPHA STOCKS

Investors in Tokyo sell after advance

Shares closed slightly lower on profit-taking after the gains of the previous two days. The Nikkei index eased 24.97 points, or 0.08 per cent, to 30,945.61. In a day of few dominant factors, investors bought issues case-by-case. But brokers were heartened by another day of high turnover.

Mr George Nimmo, the manager of equities sales at SBCI Securities Japan, said: "It's good to see the market holding up remarkably well given the jitters we had a month ago."

Brokers said that the momentum on Tuesday continued into yesterday's trading, with about 700 million shares changing hands against 750 million.

The Nikkei surged in an early-morning rally, clearing 31,000 points, but fell in late morning on profit-taking and selling by arbitrageurs of long cash positions. Morning dealings finished with the index down 121 points. It regained some ground in thinner afternoon trading.

Rises outnumbered falls by more than five to four with 572 higher, 409 lower, and 139 unchanged.

Pharmaceuticals led the rise, followed by the property, credit/lease, paper/pulp, retail, machinery, airline, chemicals, steel and rubber sectors. Non-life insurers fell, as did the warehouse, oil, railway/bus, broking, communications, service, electrical and precision machinery sectors.

● **Hang Seng** - The Hang Seng index shook off morning losses of almost 25 points to close down 11.31 at 2,942.27. The broader-based Hong Kong index lost 7.08 to 1,932.50. Prices closed off their lows as institutions maintained their cautious stance.

● **Frankfurt** - The DAX index slipped 2.73 to 1,896.55.

WALL STREET

Profit-taking clips Dow

New York THE Dow Jones industrial average was down 3 points at 2,730.56 in early trading but, in the general market, rising shares took a small lead over falls. The general market was stubbornly edging higher after gains in seven consecutive trading days.

However, blue-chip issues showed small losses on profit-taking. Analysts said the selling was expected and several still forecast that the Dow average would approach its

record close of 2,810.00 in the short-term. Some support was based on success of the first part of the Treasury refunding and expectations of success in the final two auctions this week.

● **Sydney** - The All-Ordinaries index closed 0.9 of a point up at 1,477.8 after moving within a narrow range. The market closed slightly firmer after drifting most of the day.

● **Singapore** was closed for a public holiday.

Table of stock prices and indices

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[illegible][illegible]

Exchange Index compared with 1985 was down at 87.5 (day's range 87.5-87.6).				OTHER STERLING RATE			
STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES							
Market rates for May 8							
		Cross	1 month	3 months			
New York	1.6752-1.6895	1.6785-1.6785	0.94-0.938	2.80-2.795	Argentina austral*	841.10-841.9	
Moscow	1.6752-1.6895	1.6785-1.6785	0.94-0.938	2.80-2.795	Australia dollar	2.025-2.021	
Amsterdam	3.0918-3.0937	3.0918-3.0937	1.14-1.14	54-54	Bahrain cedi	0.6285-0.63	
London	1.6752-1.6895	1.6785-1.6785	0.94-0.938	2.80-2.795	Brazil cruzado	54.8167-56.33	
Copenhagen	10.47-10.47	10.47-10.47	1.14-1.14	54-54	Canada dollar	0.73-0.73	
Dublin	2.0485-2.0288	2.0245-2.0255	1.14-1.14	54-54	Finland markka	6.5240-6.525	
France	1.6752-1.6895	1.6785-1.6785	0.94-0.938	2.80-2.795	Greece drachma	270.30-274	
Germany	24.28-24.28	24.28-24.28	1.14-1.14	54-54	India rupee	15.43-15.43	
Madrid	172.17-173.22	172.17-173.22	1.14-1.14	54-54	Indonesia	28.93-29	
Mexico	20.73-20.73	20.73-20.73	1.14-1.14	54-54	Kuwait dirham	4.887-4.885	
Osaka	20.73-20.73	20.73-20.73	1.14-1.14	54-54	Malaysia ringgit	4.52-4.52	
Paris	10.47-10.47	10.47-10.47	1.14-1.14	54-54	Mexico peso	4.025-4.07	
Rome	2.0485-2.0288	2.0245-2.0255	1.14-1.14	54-54	New Zealand dollar	2.5089-2.513	
Stockholm	9.2522-9.2365	9.2522-9.2365	1.14-1.14	54-54	Philippine peso	4.52-4.52	
Tokyo	10.52-10.52	10.52-10.52	1.14-1.14	54-54	Singapore dollar	0.7325-0.732	
Vienna	19.33-19.44	19.33-19.44	1.14-1.14	54-54	South Africa rand	3.7435-3.743	
Zurich	2.0485-2.0288	2.0245-2.0255	1.14-1.14	54-54	Switzerland franc	6.7125-6.72	
London	1.6752-1.6895	1.6785-1.6785	0.94-0.938	2.80-2.795	U.A.E. Dirham	6.7125-6.72	

*Lloyds Bank, rates supplied by telex.

Poland	1,831.0-1,862.0	Denmark	8,289.0-8,274.0	Italy	1,207.0-1,208.0
Portugal	1,855.5-1,835.5	FR Germany	1,642.3-1,643.0	Belgium (Corn)	39.96-34.0
Malaysia	2,322.0-2,322.0	Sweden	1,402.0-1,413.0	Hong Kong	7,789.5-7,769.5
Australia	3,169.3-3,183.0	Netherlands	5,847.0-5,127.0	Poland	145.75-145.0
Canada	1,155.9-1,166.9	France	5,525.5-5,533.3	Spain	113.05-113.0
Sweden	6,009.5-6,014.5	Japan	156.58-156.68	Austria	11.55-11.0
Norway	6,404.6-6,409.0				

Rates supplied by Barclays Bank, G.T.S. and E.C.T.

Base Rates %		Clearing Banks 15		Finance Hire 15%		EURO MONEY DEPOSITS %			
Discount Market Loans %		Overnight high 15		10 Week fixed: 14%		Currency			
Treasury Bills (Discount %)		Selling 2m - 14%		3m - 14%		7 day 1 mths 3 mths 6 mths			
Selling 2m - 14%		3m - 14%		6m - 14%		Dollars: 8% 7% 6% 5%			
Prime Bank Bill (Discount %)		1 mth: 14%		14% 14%		Deutschmarks: 7% 7% 6% 5%			
Trade Bills (Discount %)		1 mth: 15%		6 mth: 14%		Sfrancs: 8% 8% 7% 6%			
2 mth: 15%		3 mth: 15%		6 mth: 14%		Swiss Francs: 9% 9% 8% 7%			
1 week: 15%		1 mth: 15%		3 mth: 15%		Italian Lira: 7% 7% 6% 5%			
2 mth: 15%		3 mth: 15%		6 mth: 14%		Yen: 8% 8% 7% 6%			
1 week: 15%		1 mth: 15%		3 mth: 15%		Euro: 9% 9% 8% 7%			

Starling CDs (%) 1 mth: 15%-15.15
 6 mth: 15%-15.15 12 mth: 15%-15.15
 18 mth: 15%-15.15 24 mth: 15%-15.15
 30 mth: 15%-15.15 36 mth: 15%-15.15
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 114 mth: 15%-15.15 120 mth: 15%-15.15
 126 mth: 15%-15.15 132 mth: 15%-15.15
 138 mth: 15%-15.15 144 mth: 15%-15.15
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LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES									
Open					High				
Low					Close				
Vol					Open				
FT-SE 100					Three month ECU				
May 82-83	2208.0	2212.0	2210.0	2215.0	Jun 90	85.53	89.83	Previous open interest	3728
Jun 82-83	2220.0	2243.0	2187.0	2190.0	Jul 90	85.53	89.83	Previous open interest	3728
Three month Sterling	Previous open interest 1637.07				US Treasury Bond	Previous open interest 4544			
Jun 80	84.78	84.78	84.77	84.12	30-15	90.17	90.17	Previous open interest	1616
Jul 80	85.03	84.96	84.98	84.58	Long Gilt	Previous open interest 5571			
Three Month Eurodollar	Previous open interest 13527				Japanese Govt Bond	Previous open interest 757			
Jun 90	91.43	91.44	91.25	91.27	30-10	90.21	90.21	Previous open interest	178
Jul 90	91.03	91.28	91.25	91.27	German Govt Bond	Previous open interest 757			
Three Month Euro DM	Previous open interest 70341				30-10	84.10	84.14	Previous open interest	4328
Jun 90	91.32	91.47	91.32	91.43	30-10	84.06	84.12	Previous open interest	1190
Jul 90	91.32	91.47	91.32	91.43					
COMMODITIES									
LONDON OIL REPORTS									
Crude oil prices continued to drift higher on news that Saudi Arabia had asked customers to reduce their May isings Gasoline continued to firm versus Naphtha but heavily. Other products stable to a shade weaker in most trading.									
CRUDE OILS/REFINED (BBL/FUT)									
Brent 01/82	16.55	-25							
15 day May	16.55	-25							
15 day Jun	17.15	-25							
WTI Jul	18.60	-15							
WTI Jul	19.15	-15							
PRODUCTS BUYERS' SMT.									
Spot CIP NW Euro - prompt delivery									
Gasol EEC	-1	154-155	-1						
Non 1H Jun	-2	154-155	-2						
Non 1H Jul	-1	154-155	-1						
S.S. Fuel Oil	-1	74-75	-1						
Naphtha	-5	148-149	-5						
BIFEX									
GM Freight Futures Dry Cargo (\$10/MT)									
May 80	1340-1300	Low	Close 1301						
Jun 80	1125-1101	Low	Close 1102						
Jul 80	1149-1109	Low	Close 1102						
Oct 80	1235-1205	Low	Close 1205						
Vol 101	Open	Interest	2725						
Dry cargo index	1321	-3							
LONDON FOX									
COCOA	May 82-83	Mar 89-898							
Jul 84-83	May 90-903								
Dec 85-85	May 90-903								
Dec 87-88	May 90-903								
COPPER	May 82-83	Mar 89-898							
Jul 84-83	May 90-903								
Dec 85-85	May 90-903								
Dec 87-88	May 90-903								
LONDON METAL EXCHANGE									
Official prices/volume previous day									

The prices in this section refer to Tuesday's trading

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A SPECIAL REPORT

GOLDEN JUBILEE

Voice of growing concern

There are many aid agencies in the United Kingdom to help older people and those who care for them get the best out of life (Pat Blair writes). Many turn to Citizens' Advice Bureaux and there is a multiplicity of voluntary bodies providing specific services, such as Meals on Wheels.

The two main organizations are Age Concern — a confederation of local independent groups under the four national bodies in the British Isles — and Help the Aged, a charity that concerns itself with older people here and overseas, providing information by telephone and in print and running a housing division to manage 500 sheltered and unsheltered dwellings, as well as residential homes and donated houses.

Celebrating its golden jubilee this year, Age Concern England is a youngster compared to the people it serves. By the year 2000, there will be nearly 10 million people over the age of retirement. Most are likely to be reasonably healthy and active, but they will have profound effects nationally on social policy, pension planning and health care.

Through its advice to governments on policy and its service of help and information to individuals and groups, Age Concern England has come to a position of influence in the care and welfare of older citizens, providing well-researched facts and figures.

"We were the first voluntary agency to have someone help an all-party group of MPs to raise the level of debate about older people," Dr Sally Greengross, the director of Age Concern England, says. "We now service two all-party groups, one in the Lords and one in the Commons. It does the same on a European level. For a voluntary organization we have a sophisticated policy and organization department which is working all the time on legislation and proposals."

Age Concern is the country's largest such charity and brings together more than 80 organizations and representatives of its confederation of about 1,100 independent local Age Concern groups in England. If one includes the other three national Age Concern federations, there are about 1,500 such groups in the UK in contact with millions.

Age Concern England is undertaking eight pilot projects to see how computers can be used to impart information on both national and local services to a wider number of people. If feasible, computers would be based with local Age Concern groups.

Along with King's College, London University, the agency established in 1986, the Age Concern Institute of Gerontology to further the study of that specialty, the academic study of age and aging.

Pat Blair examines controversial plans to care for the old at home or in the private sector

Government intentions towards community services affecting elderly people living at home or in residences other than hospitals have provoked a mixture of hope and disappointment among professionals, voluntary organizations and the private care sector.

There are fears that the range of proposals, in a White Paper that followed an inquiry by Sir Roy Griffiths, and the National Health Service and Community Care Bill now going through Parliament, will miss their mark unless there is real co-operation between all the agencies involved, something that has often failed to happen in the past.

The Bill would, from next April, make local authorities the co-ordinating agencies for community care. They would be expected to place greater emphasis on looking after people in their own homes wherever possible and also to make greater use of private sector facilities.

Getting this system right is important when the number of people aged over 65 is projected to rise by almost a million after the turn of the century — and those aged over 85, the most dependent, by more than half a million.

Professor Elaine Murphy, a psycho-geriatrician and general manager of Lewisham and North Southwark Health Authority, says: "With our knowledge at the moment it is easy to predict the services that will be required. It is manageable."

The new legislation will help. "Health authorities need to sit down with local authorities and agree on the spectrum of provision of care — from those with a mild degree of dependency to those wholly dependent and ensure we have a comprehensive plan to fill in all the gaps."

When it comes to accommodation there is a wide range of options, although choice is not available to everyone, often because of lack of money. There is supported care in one's own home; retirement housing; sheltered housing, where a care warden is on hand; residential homes, public and private, which have to be registered with the local authority; and nursing homes — health-authority registered — which are mostly private or run by charitable organizations, although there are three National Health Service nursing homes under a pilot scheme. Limited resources have meant that many local authorities have been unable to expand their provision of homes for elderly people, which has left much of the development to the private and voluntary sectors. They contain some of the best provision there is, and also some of the worst, but what concerns many people is how to pay for it.

According to Dr Sally Greengross, the director of Age Concern England:



Smiling through: the number of people aged over 65 is projected to rise by almost a million by the year 2000

Raising the gentle hand of warning

"The latest worries we have had and have been very forceful about to government have been the problems of people in residential care and nursing homes who have literally run out of money."

The trouble lies in this gap between what people and the state or local authorities will pay and what it costs to run homes and services for dependent elderly people.

The NHS nursing homes experiment was set up because of the cost of keeping old people unnecessarily in hospital. However, according to an evaluation by Newcastle University for the Department of Health, they have proved to be only slightly cheaper and the indications are that the private sector can perform the role more cost-effectively.

"The private sector also wants to provide domiciliary and out-reach services, but the great fear is that the amount of remuneration coming from social services for this type of care will not cover their costs," says Dr Patrick Carr, chief executive of the Residential Nursing Home Association.

While being critical of the Government's proposals, Dr Carr is equally scathing of those who are in the nursing-home business for profit at the expense of good care. He would like to see the "cowboys" pushed out. He defines them as those "more interested in making money than giving genuine care."

"Everybody in independent health care needs to make money if you can't, you will go out of business," he says. But the association's 22 years of

experience suggests that there are between a third and a quarter of the nursing homes in the country that it would not admit into membership.

The association runs its own inspectorate, with qualified nurses checking the quality of care in homes, whether they are palatial or more simple abodes. "Over the past four years, we have turned down and/or put out of membership about a 100 nursing homes," he says. Those homes are still operating, still registered by the health authority, he says, although the association does inform the local authority concerned.

Tactically, he says, health authorities agree that they often take no further action as they would be left with the problem of where to accommodate the residents if the home was closed.

Age goes under the microscope

Studies may help to cut accidents

Are elderly drivers at greater risk? Do they have more accidents and what makes them alter their driving habits? The answers are not known — yet. However, by 1992, when the single European market comes into being, researchers collaborating in Britain and The Netherlands may have discovered more about normal older drivers (Pat Blair writes).

The study, requested by the European Commission's Drive Programme, is one of many under way at the Age Concern Institute of Gerontology, King's College, London. The unanswered questions show how little is known about normal old age.

Although gerontology — the study of ageing and old age — has long been an academic subject, it was only in 1986 that the institute was set up. It came, says Anthea Tinker, professor of social gerontology at King's College and director of the institute, from Age Concern's research unit, which sought a more academic environment with access to a wider range of disciplines.

King's was chosen as its base because of the number of people at the university who were already studying old age — more than 60 in all academic fields, from nursing to biomolecular studies. "That was the key," Prof Tinker says, "the potential for multi-disciplinary research."

This month the institute publishes research after a three-year study, tested at Ipswich, Suffolk and Newham, east London, to assess whether elderly people with dementia can be sustained in their own homes for longer than at present possible, by providing additional support.

It is also starting a five-year study into successful survival in the community, looking at indications of how much care people will need around the age of 85, and considering whether they will have to move into institutions.

Prof Tinker says: "We are looking at those who survive independently with a reasonable quality of care and

quality of life and at the end of the time trying to tease out what enabled them to do so."

Whether it is from such studies as looking into services for ethnic minorities, commissioned by the Department of Health, or the effects of fluorescent lighting on the eyesight of the elderly, funded by industry and with the resources of Moorfields Eye Hospital, the institute aims to spread as widely as possible the knowledge it has accumulated, to help planners, policy-makers and the providers of services as well as older people themselves.

For example, in investigating the causes and consequences of falls among old



Professor Anthea Tinker: great potential for research

people, under a study funded by the Department of Trade and Industry, the institute wants to identify which people fall and what can be done to prevent, treat and rehabilitate.

The second stage of research involves seeking similar examples in other countries, such as community-teaching programmes or educational video films on how to make the home safer.

"In the third stage, we are going to set up a big demonstration project — if we get the funding — based at King's College Hospital, which will bring the best of everything we have learnt from all over the world," Prof Tinker says. "We will then see if we can, over a period of time, reduce the number of accidents."

If that works, it could be replicated all over the UK.

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Computer techniques could make life easier and safer for the elderly. Pat Blair looks at a new industry advocated by a university scientist



Handy: Professor Wolff shows stick-on components for managing switches and plugs



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Computer technology today makes it easy to design an environment that will talk to you. Sensors on a cooker could detect that it was on longer than usual and activate a voice asking whether you had forgotten something. Similarly, sensors could tell whether an elderly person had gone to bed and was warming up properly, and could understand a mumble if that person was in trouble and alert a neighbour.

If there were 50 sensors in the house, you could have a good idea of what the occupant was doing. You would know whether the front door or windows had been left open and whether something had been left switched on. Such a conscience, or watch-dog, is technically possible and would not be particularly expensive, about £2,000, according to Professor Heinz Wolff, head of the Institute for Bioengineering at Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex.

"You would have the combination of a memory and a watch-dog," he says. "It need be no more than something akin to a bleep or an alarm on a watch." The ways in which society can offer old people modern gadgets to help them live more easily is a preoccupation for him.

At the institute technological connections are made between apparently disparate fields - outer space, undersea diving, medicine, disability and old age. Prof Wolff explained the link in his inaugural lecture after setting up the institute in 1983: "I said it was all to do with people who had some difficulty in relating to their environment. The divers obviously have a very hostile environment, spacemen have a very hostile environ-

ment, little old ladies have a very hostile environment. This was the thread that tied it all together."

He believed there was probably a basis for a new technology-based industry producing appliances and gadgets - tools for living - that were of particular service to elderly people and which might help correct some of the defects that develop with age.

Mankind's story is the story of tools, he says. None of the things we are or have done could have been achieved without appropriate tools, from flint hammer to spectacles or computer. They are the means that allow humans to impose their will on nature or other humans.

In terms of mankind, however, old people are a new tribe. Only 100 years ago, people who were frail and aged over 65 would have been rare. It has taken thousands of years to develop artefacts for able-bodied adult use. The development of tools for the physically weaker or disabled is still in its infancy by comparison.

Developing the technology is only a small part of the challenge, Prof Wolff says. The problems arise when you try to fit these advances into society. The institute has a contract to make a device that will remind people when to take their medicine. Prof Wolff says it is not technically difficult to design something that, say, rings a bell and drops a pill into a hopper. It can even be elaborate, such as flashing a message on a television screen.

The questions arise after that. Who will load the pills into it? Is it the pharmacist who dispenses the medicine? If so, will the pharmacist be paid, and who pays?

Must it be someone professionally qualified or could it be a neighbour,



Stumble-proof: the trolley that locks if you lose your footing

who then may be sued for inserting the wrong pills?

How and where an old person finds the appropriate tools, and how they are paid for if the individual does not have the money, poses other problems. In Britain, those persistent enough could get many things free

from public sources. Yet, Prof Wolff says, it is only when you have a market that you get reasonable design and lower costs.

There are few places where everything needed in old age is available under one roof, the equivalent of Mothercare for children. At least two companies supply a range of gadgets, made by themselves and others: Nottingham Rehab and Homecraft.

Three years ago, Nottingham Rehab set up Ways & Means, an independent company operating a mail order service. It offers about 200 of the 5,000 items that Nottingham Rehab sells through institutions where specialist advice is available.

Prof Wolff suggests that "granny shops" could be another answer, whether independent or under franchise in large department stores, where an expert consultant could help with equipment that required professional advice.

Prof Wolff says he focuses on elderly people because their large numbers seemed to create a market.

"I also thought they were getting a raw deal," he says. "Out of the technological world, they have had least advantage from it."

"If all I was doing was to add another three things to the good aids that there are already, I would not find that in itself a particularly satisfying career. But to say that we do that because we can see there are certain gaps in the market - to combine that with really trying to change the attitude, the circumstances in which it operates - seemed to me to be worthwhile, although it is much more difficult to do. I have cast myself to some extent in the role of trying to change hearts and minds."

A wealth of advice on money

Jon Ashworth explains the guidance available to pensioners

The three most important things in elderly people's lives are likely to be health, happiness and money. Usually health and happiness depend on how much cash is left at the end of the month. As most pensioners have to count every penny, a sudden expense can have a terrible effect on the budget. However, many elderly people do not realise there are places to turn to when money worries get too much.

The telephone directory will probably reveal several advice centres within easy reach. They will offer to help with claiming age allowances or understanding technical letters. A good place to start is the charity Age Concern, which has more than 1,400 branches. Counsellors advise on money problems, check that elderly or disabled people are claiming all benefits due to

them, and arrange for bill payments to be rescheduled.

Dr Sally Greengross, Age Concern's director, says elderly people are often referred to other advisers if they have specific queries.

In addition, more than 100,000 people write to or telephone Age Concern direct every year. To cut the workload it has published three guides and at least 30 fact sheets. The first guide, *Your Taxes & Savings*, costing £2.70 and now being reprinted, outlines the tax rates fixed in the Budget, and lists the bewildering variety of savings accounts and products that have sprung up in recent years. It could be all the general advice on tax and investment that many older people need.

The second, *Your Rights 1990-91*, costing £1.95, looks at the money benefits available for the elderly. It shows how the single person's weekly £46.90 pension can be topped up and explains what people who want to work part-time must do. It discusses the community charge and ways of minimizing the extra cost it brings and includes a chapter on benefits for the disabled.

The third booklet has a warning about home income plans, which give loans with the old person's home as security. Scarcely a week goes by without another mailshot urging retired home-owners to "unlock the value of your home". In *Using Your Home as Capital*, costing £2.50, the elderly are warned not to rush into schemes without checking the details carefully.

The fact sheets, which deal with everything from the poll tax to making a will, are available at local branches or from Age Concern, Freeport, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 9AS (081-640 5431).

Elderly people living in London may like to try Pensioners Link, a charity set up in 1964. Advisers at the eight branches will tackle money problems or anything else, and sometimes visit people at home if they cannot easily get out.

Shevanthi Gonesekera at the Kensington and Chelsea branch says many pensioners get in touch because they find it hard to make ends meet. Others bring in letters they have received about the poll tax or income support.

"Many of them have difficulty paying the gas or electricity bills," she says. "We can get in touch with the fuel boards and negotiate with them. Very often these things

can be sorted out quite easily.

"They feel relieved because someone has sat and listened to them. They know they can ring me or come and see me."

For local addresses and more information, contact The Central Office, Pensioners Link, 405-407 Holloway Road, London N7 071-700 4070.

Charities such as Pensioners Link can also check to make sure the elderly are claiming all the benefits and allowances to which they are entitled. The attendance and mobility allowances may be especially useful as they are tax-free.

There are more than 1,000 Citizens' Advice Bureaux in Britain and many of them run money advice centres to deal with specific problems.

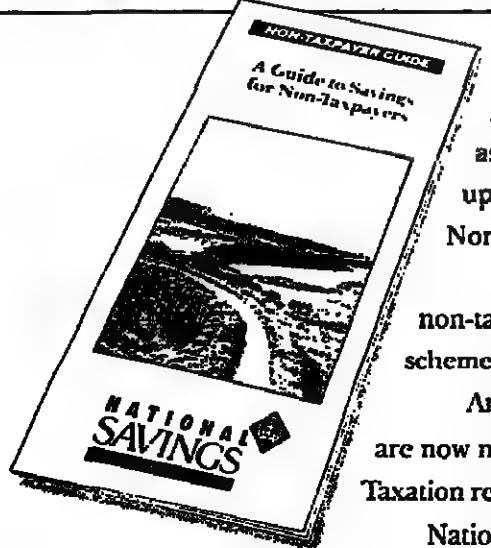
Like Age Concern and Pensioners Link, the "Cit-

izens' Advice", as it is warmly known, may be able to get bills rescheduled to help the elderly through a difficult time. During the 1980s the number of people seeking help with their finances more than doubled. There were 1.4 million inquiries during 1988 and 1989 alone, when the surge in interest rates began to bite.

Local branches are under C in the telephone directory. People who are housebound are encouraged to telephone or write, while those in debt will be passed on to the more specialized money advice support units.

For many elderly people, local social security offices have enough information for their needs, and counsellors do their best to help with queries. There is usually a good supply of leaflets explaining the benefits and allowances payable.

AFTER ALL YOUR PARENTS HAVE DONE FOR YOU, REPAY THEM WITH INTEREST.



If you have a parent who doesn't pay Income Tax, and who has some small savings put aside, you could do him or her a good turn by picking up a copy of our 'Guide to Savings for Non-Taxpayers' at your local post office.

It helps people to work out whether they are non-taxpayers. It also helps them to find a savings scheme that is right for them.

And it has useful savings tips for married women who are now non-taxpayers as a result of the new Independent Taxation regulations.

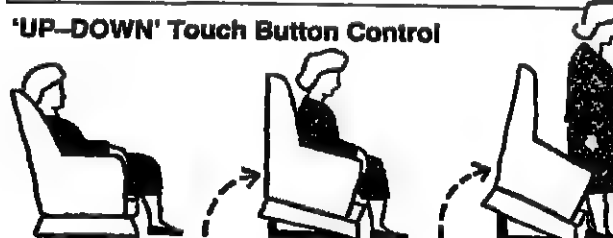
National Savings has special schemes that are of particular benefit to non-taxpayers because there's no tax taken off the interest before you get it. And non-taxpayers keep the lot!

For a more detailed free guide phone 0800 868700 (even the phone call is free).

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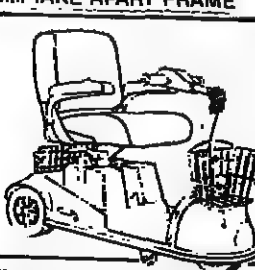
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Queen's Bench Division

Travel costs of successful defendant in person

The Law Society v Persaud
Before Mr Justice Hobhouse
[Judgment May 8]

A successful defendant was entitled to the cost of travelling from South Africa to England to conduct his case in person and to the reasonable cost of travel between Birmingham and London in connection with the case.

Although a litigant in person could not be allowed the cost of counsel who was not employed, that did not mean the taxing master was required to disallow a disbursement actually incurred so as to avoid the necessity of employing not only a solicitor but also a counsel.

Mr Justice Hobhouse so held in the Queen's Bench Division giving judgment for Norman Ernest Persaud on a review of taxation.

Order 62, rule 18 of the Rules of the Supreme Court provided: "(1) Subject to the provisions of this rule, on any taxation of the costs of a litigant in person there may be allowed such costs as would have been allowed if the work and disbursements to which the costs relate had been done or made by a solicitor or the litigant's behalf."

"(2) The amount allowed in respect of any item shall be such sum as the taxing officer thinks fit but not exceeding the amount in the case of a disbursement, two-thirds of the sum which in the opinion of the taxing officer would have been allowed in respect of that item if the litigant had been represented by a solicitor."

Mr Denis Grant, costs draftsman, for the Law Society; Mr Persaud in person.

MR JUSTICE HOBHOUSE said the defendant was living in South Africa and there received

notice of the issue of a writ by the Law Society for the recovery of money allegedly owed under a legal aid certificate.

The plaintiffs had obtained summary judgment and a charging order which the defendant had successfully contested in person.

There remained a dispute between the parties over the disallowance by the taxing master, Master Wright, of various travelling expenses incurred by the defendant.

Those fell into two categories: first, the cost, totalling £1,501.25, of travelling from South Africa to England to defend the action in person, and second, the cost of travelling between Birmingham and London, the reasonable element of which was £74.

The plaintiffs did not suggest that the defendant had been extravagant or acted in bad faith. They said the disbursements did not come within the terms of Order 62, rule 18(1).

They said no solicitor would ever have been allowed to charge as a disbursement the cost of travelling from South Africa to England since the solicitor would already be in England.

Similarly, the costs of travelling from Birmingham to London would not be allowed to a solicitor because if a solicitor had been instructed it clearly should have been a solicitor in London who would not incur the costs of travelling from Birmingham to London.

The taxing master had accepted the plaintiffs' submissions on those points.

His Lordship accepted that a London solicitor would never be justified in including in his disbursements the cost of travelling from South Africa to Eng-

land or from Birmingham to London for the purpose of attending hearings in London.

But, it was contended, that was not the relevant scenario. The defendant was conducting the litigation himself. He argued that the disbursements were reasonably made because he chose not to instruct a London solicitor.

A course of conduct which reduced the overall costs bill could not be described as unreasonable unless it had some other characteristic which created that unreasonableness: acting in person was not such a characteristic.

The defendant argued that the disbursements were reasonable since they were necessary to enable him to defend the action in person and they had not increased the costs bill which the plaintiffs had to bear.

The essence of the defendant's submission was that the making of greater disbursements had led to a reduction in so-called "profit" costs which made the disbursements reasonable.

Master Wright had concluded that the defendant had spent a total of 36 hours in respect of hearings, documents, letters and other miscellaneous items and that 4 hours 30 minutes should be allowed for waiting time.

An appropriate rate of £60 an hour and in respect of waiting time £42 an hour giving a total of £2,457.

Under Order 62, rule 18(2) that fell to be reduced by one-third, giving a figure after other minor adjustments of £1,643.

His Lordship said he had been told that the rationale behind that rule was that it represented a rule-of-thumb distinction between the expense rate for a solicitor and the profit rate on

the assumption that the expense rate was given a 50 per cent mark-up to give an appropriate level of profit for a professional firm.

Thus, as a result of acting as an amateur litigator, the defendant had saved the plaintiffs £821.

There was a strong and valid analogy with the situation where a country solicitor, already familiar with the case, chose to do a summons in London rather than employing a London agent and/or counsel to represent his client.

The criterion of reasonableness was more than sufficient to cover the very modest travelling expenses incurred between Birmingham and London.

The situation regarding travel from South Africa to England was not so straightforward. The defendant could not have spent that cost (that is, £821 less £74) on the same logic as the Birmingham to London trips. But he had to find other reasons to justify the remaining £644.25 of the travel costs.

He had to argue that if he had been legally represented, he would have had counsel as well as a solicitor. That raised a more difficult question because he did not have counsel and was not following the Court of Appeal decision in *Hart v The Aga Khan Foundation* (1984) 1 WLR 994, to be treated as if he had.

It would have been reasonable for him to have been represented by counsel as were the plaintiffs. Would those disbursements have been allowed if made by a solicitor on the litigant's behalf?

His Lordship held that those were disbursements capable of recognition as solicitor's disbursements.

Moreover, there could be no doubt that the criminal standard of proof had to be applied to subsections (2) and (3).

It was apparent that Parliament had thereby set loose one or two unruly horses which by courtesy would have to be vigilant to control.

Mr Georgeiades maintained that in section 23(3)(b) "fear" and "because he is kept out of the way" should be read conjunctively. That being so, the subsection should be taken to mean that the Crown could not succeed in applying to read a witness statement unless it established that something had occurred since the commission of the offence which had put the witness in such fear as effectively to keep him out of the way.

While the burden placed on the Divisional Court might sometimes be an onerous one when this provision was relied upon, the restraint upon admission in section 26, properly regarded, afforded adequate protection for a defendant.

Counsel for the defendant submitted that the fear had to be genuine and based on reasonable grounds and the test was objective not subjective. His Lordship did not agree.

It was not helpful in the context to speak of the objective or subjective approach. It would be sufficient that the court, on the evidence, was sure that the witness was in fear, as a consequence of the material offence or of something said or done subsequently in relation to it and the possibility of the witness testifying to it.

It had been said that the supervening justice had not acted in accordance with section 26; indeed he had said in his statement he had not considered the section at all. He clearly should have done but the court was not concerned with that decision would nonetheless have been the same.

Solicitors: Powell, Magrath & Spencer, Kilburn; Murrays, Southwark; CFS, Queen Anne's Gate.

There was nothing in the Court of Appeal decision in *Hart v The Aga Khan Foundation* which precluded the taxing master from allowing reasonable disbursements which had in fact been incurred.

Unlike the costs in dispute in *Hart's* case the defendant's disbursements were not notional but were actual and if reasonable and if a solicitor had been employed could and would have been included in a solicitor's bill.

The fact that the Court of Appeal had said one should not allow the cost of counsel who were not employed did not mean that the taxing master was required to disallow a disbursement actually incurred so as to avoid the necessity of employing not only a solicitor but also counsel.

The taxing master had approached the matter in too literal a fashion. On the facts of the present case the costs sought to be recovered by the defendant did not exceed what would have been the actual costs and the disbursements allowable to a London solicitor.

If one translated the situation to that of a litigant in person resident in, say, Manchester or Sheffield having to defend and represent himself in London, to assert that he should not be allowed to include as a disbursement the actually incurred cost of travelling from his home town to London to attend hearings was to introduce an absurdity and manifest injustice.

There was still an overall saving to the other side as a result of the relevant party having chosen to represent himself.

Solicitors: Penningtons for the claimant; Miss Geneva Caws for the Chief Adjudication Officer.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said that the appeal raised a question of construction on regulation 9(4A). Although supplementary benefit was replaced by income support in 1988, the same question could still arise.

The claimant and his wife, who were both in poor health, lived in Trevor House, Camborne, an establishment

run by the Abbeyfield Society. They were provided with accommodation and midday and evening meals. It was a "residential care home" for the purposes of the 1983 Regulations.

In 1987 an adjudication officer had decided that the claimant was entitled to supplementary benefit in an amount sufficient to meet the cost of board and lodging.

However, the claimant challenged the amount of that benefit on the ground that it made no allowance for the cost to him of laundry, attendance and domestic assistance for his wife and for a special diet for himself.

Those services were not provided by Trevor House but by third parties to whom the claimant made payment direct.

In June 1988 an appeal tribunal gave a decision in favour of the claimant, holding that under regulation 9(4A) the weekly amount for board and lodging could be increased to cover his additional costs.

Against that decision the adjudication officer appealed to the Social Security Commissioner who in July 1989 allowed the appeal. He held that regulation 9(4A) did not allow the weekly amount to be increased to cover the additional costs.

The scheme of the Supplementary Benefit Act 1976 and the regulations made pursuant thereto was that there was a general entitlement to benefit if a claimant's resources were insufficient to meet his requirements, the amount of the benefit being the amount of the shortfall.

Since 1987 the general rule was that a person in residential care was not entitled to claim for additional requirements but only for normal requirements.

Regulation 9 dealt with the amount of the normal requirements of "boarders" who included persons paying charges inclusive of their accommodation and at least some meals. The claimant and his wife met that description.

"Normal requirements" included a weekly amount for board and lodging which was to be determined in accordance

with regulation 9(4) and (4A). The claimant, having paid separately for laundry, attendance and special diet, might be thought, as he contended, to have paid separate charges for the provisions of the services within paragraph (4A).

But the adjudication officer throughout had maintained that that provision only applied to charges made by those who provided the board and lodging and not to charges made by third parties.

A studied analysis of the language of regulation 9 led to the conclusion that that construction was correct. The "separate charge" referred to in paragraph (4A) could only be a separate charge made by those who provided the board and lodging. It could not be one made by a third party.

The commissioner had evidently not regarded the result as fair. He spoke of "the inherent injustice in a claimant having himself to pay the cost of the relevant services without recourse to the control of the house, he is unable to call upon the proprietors to provide them whereas had the home been prepared to co-operate, he would have recovered under regulation 9(4A)."

Surely, the criterion should be, not the agency by which the relevant services were provided, but the genuineness of the need for such services.

That view was no doubt one to which attention would be given by those who had responsibility for administering the regulations.

It had been a considerable comfort for the court to hear from Miss Caws that there might be another route, namely the transitional provisions in paragraph 6 of the 1987 Amendment Regulations that introduced a new regulation 13A into the 1983 Requirements Regulations, by which the claimant's position could to some extent be made good.

Lord Justice Stocker and Lord Justice Bingham gave concurring judgments.

Solicitors: Sinclair Taylor & Martin, North Kensington; Solicitor, DHSS.

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Solicitors: Sinclair Taylor & Martin, North Kensington; Solicitor, DHSS.

Admissibility of scared witness's evidence in writing

Regina v Acton Justices, Ex parte McMillen and Others
Before Lord Justice Watkins and Mr Justice Poole
[Judgment May 3]

A statement in writing given by a witness was admissible in criminal proceedings as evidence of any fact of which direct oral evidence by him would be admissible where the witness was unable to give the evidence through fear, whether arising as a result of the circumstances of the offence or acts or words occurring subsequently.

While the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 allowing the reception of such statements were novel and had released an untold horde, any danger of a flood of written evidence pouring into the criminal courts to the detriment of the defendant was adequately restrained by the process of judgment and discretion to which evidence would inevitably be subject.

Once it had been found that the witness could not give the evidence through fear and the stipulations of section 23(3) of the Act had been satisfied, its admissibility was not subject to any discretion, although whether it was admitted or not remained so. The provisions of the Act covered old style committal proceedings as well as those at trial.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held when refusing applications for judicial

review by Christopher McMillen, David Burke and Raymond Canning of the decision of Acton Justices, and of Jason Lawlor of the decision of the Tower Bridge Metropolitan Magistrate, by which they had refused to admit a statement in writing given by a witness in criminal proceedings in writing at old style committal proceedings, under section 6 of the Magistrates Courts Act 1980.

Section 23 of the 1988 Act provides: "(1) ... a statement made by a person in a document shall be admissible in criminal proceedings as evidence of any fact of which direct oral evidence by him would be admissible if ... (ii) the requirements of subsection (3) ... are satisfied."

"(3) The requirements in subsection (1)(ii) are - (a) that the statement was made to a police officer or some other person charged with the duty of investigating offences or charging offenders; and (b) that the person who made it does not give oral evidence through fear or because he is kept out of the way."

Mr Elikios Georgeiades for the Law Society; Mr Andrew Campbell-Tech for McMillen, Burke and Canning; Mr David Howard Evans for the DPP.

LORD JUSTICE WATKINS, giving the judgment of the court, said that the provisions in Part II of the 1988 Act, where section 23(3) occurred, were in some part novel.

Mr Elikios Georgeiades for the Law Society; Mr Andrew Campbell-Tech for McMillen, Burke and Canning; Mr David Howard Evans for the DPP.

Whatever else might be seen to present difficulties for the court in those provisions there was no doubt, in his Lordship's view, that the dual test, admissibility and whether the witness was kept out of the way, which had to be applied before a statement was admitted and read, the court would, in many circumstances call for the most careful and scrupulous exercise of judgment and discretion.

Mr Elikios Georgeiades for the Law Society; Mr Andrew Campbell-Tech for McMillen, Burke and Canning; Mr David Howard Evans for the DPP.

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● MEDICINE: SKIN CANCER DIAGNOSIS
● TECHNOLOGY: 'NEW AGE' CROFTERS

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

One small step is a giant leap in vision

Microrobots doing internal body repairs may seem futuristic but the reality is close, Phillip Campbell says

Nanotechnology is a burgeoning scientific field that suggests exciting possibilities, ranging from microrobots inside the body performing surgery to those used in the atmosphere attacking pollutants. Scientists have even talked of using them as microscopic troops, penetrating enemy computers, or sabotaging leader's brains. But such futuristic speculation tends to detract from the reality of nanotechnology which is in use today in such areas as highly-precise engineering.

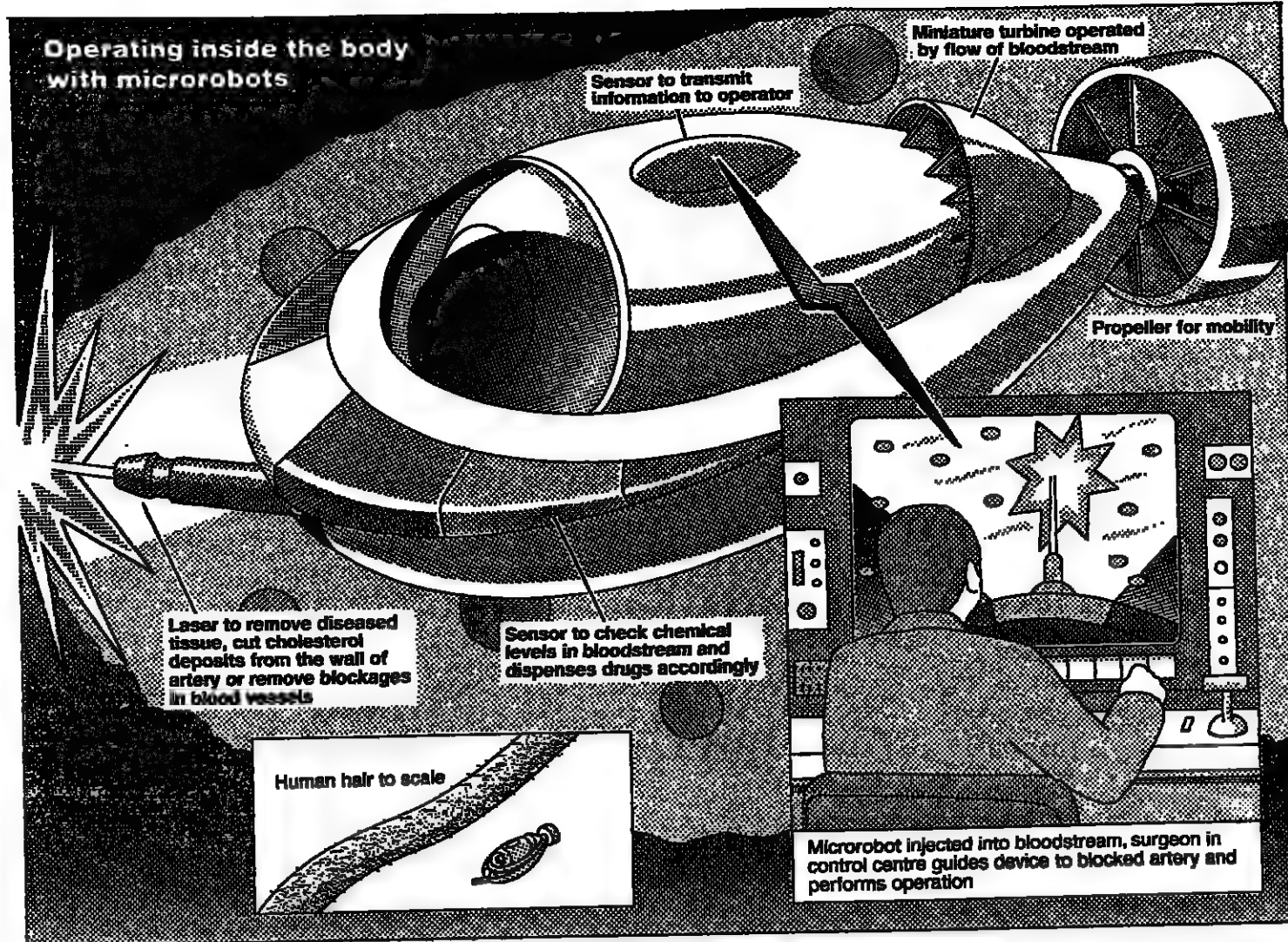
Nanotechnology is the ability to shape and use materials at scales as small as individual atoms. The "nano" prefix refers to the unit of size known as the nanometre, or one thousandth of a millionth of a metre. This is about three times the distance between atoms in everyday materials — and, with the help of new devices, some scientists have begun to manipulate substances, atom by atom.

A group of Canadian biomedical engineers, with the help of a unique "tele-microrobot" that converts directions to submicroscopic movement, has been able to mechanically test fibres by pulling, twisting and manipulating the internal parts of muscle cells. Though manipulating atoms may seem a pipedream, the fact remains that if several strands of nanotechnology now in use fulfil their potential, micromachines — including microrobots — could become reality.

Next week Japanese and American experts will join British speakers at an Institute of Physics conference at the Royal Festival Hall in London that will explain why academia, industry and governments in Europe, North America and Japan are taking a keen interest in the discipline.

The developing ability to work at or below the nanometre scale has already opened up a new field of technology. Unhappily for the proselytizers of the discipline, these have been mainly in the fields of integrated circuits and high-precision machining — worthy enough, but hardly the stuff to fire the taxpayer's imagination.

Perhaps that is why so much is made of the highly futuristic visions of some nanotechnologists. The hype is often dangerously hard to distinguish from possible reality. Onlookers are apt to be reminded of other technologies that were eventually marred in the public eye by premature exaggeration.



WHEN FICTION MEETS REALITY: MOVES TOWARDS ANOTHER FANTASTIC VOYAGE

TWENTY-FIVE years after the film, *Fantastic Voyage*, in which doctors and a submarine were reduced to microscopic size, and injected into the human bloodstream to perform a brain operation, scientists believe it may eventually be possible to send miniaturized robots on similar errands.

Futuristic but feasible projects could include machines only a millionth of a metre long,

performing a range of extraordinary tasks within the body, pursuing viruses and attacking cancer cells, cleaning up cholesterol from arteries and dissolving blood clots.

They might be equipped with turbines driven by the flow of the bloodstream, and armed with cutting tools, diagnostic and imaging systems. They could carry transmitters to relay information back to doctors at control desks.

Another version could be an "intelligent pill" which, once injected, carries out chemical analyses of the blood and decides if and when drugs should be released, aimed at specific parts of the body.

According to the US National Science Foundation, such innovations are no longer technological daydreams, but worthy of serious study.

(Remember the promises of unlimited free energy when early atomic reactors were inaugurated?) It seems now that the future of nanotechnology risks suffering from public scepticism bred of today's hype.

The fanciful projections aside, where is nanotechnology now? The Canadian muscle-testing machine, developed by Dr Ian Hunter and colleagues at McGill University in Montreal, is one of the leading examples of microrobotics.

The machine is of a normal size, but works with nanometre precision using its robotic attributes.

The project's aim is understanding the mechanical behaviour of the proteins that do the work

within muscle fibres. The machine has "actuators", such as linear motors, to produce tiny forces or movements; sensors to receive laser light reflected from the manipulated object so that the effects of the robot's actions can be monitored; and a "brain" — a computer that can independently co-ordinate simultaneous movements of the robot's limbs.

A parallel system of controls allows humans to take the driving seat if so desired.

Dr Hunter foresees the relatively cumbersome machinery that drives his robot getting larger, not smaller; his principal aim is to provide more range in the manipulations. This is in sharp

contrast to the microminaturization of an entire system for a "bloodstream robot" or "intelligent dust".

Already, for example, the large electronics manufacturers around the world are undertaking billion pound research programmes to generate the microchip of the future, consisting of nano-sized features etched into innovative semiconductor compounds.

New markets are expanding with the high-precision mechanical engineering tools that are being developed. The ability to make ultra-smooth surfaces with nanometre tolerances will, for example, open up a new range of devices used to reflect and focus X-

rays. Optical technology such as compact disc memories and holography also require nano-scale precision for best performance. As for mechanical microengineering, the accepted rule is that the smaller the device, the tougher it is and the faster it can act; innovative applications now being explored include pressure sensors, printing, displays, telecommunications and medical equipment.

These examples highlight the key aspect of nanotechnology that has encouraged many governments to support its development: the large number of potential applications spanning several industrial sectors.

The most fun can be had in imagining the possibilities for com-

pletely new machines that such developments bring into prospect. In 1988, the highly respectable US National Science Foundation produced an influential report that identified a list of feasible applications, resulting from systems and components likely to be in use within a few years, including, in medicine:

- "smart pills" in which sensors are combined with dose-regulating drug dispensers;
- silicon micro-connectors for repairing blood vessels;
- catheter-based ultrasonic medical diagnosis;
- sensor-controlled valves and filters for use in artificial organs.

So what are the capabilities of today's nanotechnologists and micro-machinists? The working material for most is silicon, for two reasons: first, it can be obtained in pure crystalline form, so that, no matter how small the artefact, one is not impeded by structural or other defects. Secondly, the methods used in the semiconductor industry for integrating millions of electronic components on silicon chips matches the engineering needs for the microtechnologies.

Today the construction of free-moving jointed structures, such as interacting gear wheels or linked crankshafts, is possible on a similar microscopic scale.

Meanwhile, microengineers are beginning to learn how to incorporate metal contacts in such devices so that electric fields can be used to drive them. The most celebrated example is an "electrostatic motor" one-tenth of a millimetre in diameter, built at the Sensor and Actuator Centre at Berkeley, California.

No doubt such devices will appear hopelessly primitive in only a few years. But the key to the more outlandish ambitions of microrobotics will be the "brains" in micromachines.

Semiconductor technology at present could never accomplish the degree of close packing that the powerful microrobotics' internal computers would need.

But some experts are speculating that in the early decades of the next century, "quantum coupled circuit" technology, exploiting the ability of electrons to tunnel across barriers without need of physical connections, could lead to a million million devices — numbers characteristic of today's most powerful computers — being integrated to a single chip.

Even one decade is a long time in science and technology. Given successes already achieved and the large number of avenues being explored, one would be foolish to swear that the "nano-hype" of today will never become the "nano-reality" of tomorrow.

The author is editor of Physics World.

Progress that is skin deep

A sense of touch may create a breed of robot-butlers

AN artificial skin for robots that mimics human skin is being designed by engineers. The inventors may believe the development may hasten the science-fiction age of robot-butlers by allowing robots to "feel". Although they can work on a production line, they cannot automatically switch grips to suit different items.

Robot-butlers need to be able to distinguish automatically between, say, a dishcloth and an egg. The answer, researchers at the University of Pisa in Italy believe, could lie in a "smart" skin. They have designed one that structurally resembles human skin and senses in the way it does.

Living skin consists of two thin layers — the dermis and the epidermis. In the material being designed by the university's Dr Danilo De Rossi, the artificial dermis is made of a water-swollen gel bounded by two layers of electrodes.

The human dermis senses pressure by nerves monitoring the amount the dermis is deformed. The artificial version works in a similar way, with the voltage between the two layers of electrodes altering as more pressure is placed on the gel.

For the epidermis (upper layer), Dr De Rossi has resorted to an outer and lower rubber sheeting between which are sandwiched tiny, highly sensitive, disc-shaped piezoelectric sensors.

Piezoelectric sensors can produce an electric charge under extremely light pressures, such as those experienced when a hand encounters bumps on Braille text.

The main advantage of the Pisa system over rivals is that its epidermis can "feel" friction forces and pressures sliding across its surface.

Whether the invention will become practical depends as much on the skin as on the development of a computer capable of processing data generated by the sensors.

The skin is far from perfect: a short-circuiting difficulty is proving hard to combat. It seems that the water in the dermis is interfering with the smooth working of the sensors.

Nick Nuttall

Copernicus, who shattered traditional cosmology by contending that the Earth revolves around the Sun, was the second of four children. His bitter opponent, Tycho Brahe, was an only child.

Charles Darwin, whose theory of natural selection overturned traditional views of the creation and evolution of life, was the fifth of six children and Alfred Russell Wallace, the co-discoverer of the theory, was the last of six children.

But George Cuvier, an upholder of the creationist view, was the first child of four, as was Louis Agassiz, another opponent of Darwin.

Frank Sulloway, a historian of science who proposes that birth order makes a startling difference in the progress of science, is himself the third of four children.

Professor Sulloway cites the roles played by these and thousands of other scientists as prime evidence for a provocative theory: researchers who challenge established views tend to be born later in their families while those who support the status quo tend to be first-borns.

His proposal comes at a

First, but not always equal

Researchers are divided on the theory that birth order can influence behaviour

time when the idea that birth order leads to differences in behaviour is under fierce attack by social scientists.

Despite the attacks, the birth-order concept is an idea that refuses to die. His findings, announced in February, have sparked controversy even though they are yet to be published.

Professor Sulloway's study is perhaps the most elaborate among the continuing efforts of dozens of researchers to find a link between birth order and such things as managerial ability, drug abuse, criminality, and teenage pregnancies.

In 1988 and 1989, there were 45 scientific reports on birth order, more than a third of which found it had no effect.

In studies now under way,

Professor Sulloway, a visiting scholar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, says he is finding the same birth-order effect at work among social reformers in historical movements, such as the abolition of slavery, civil rights, union organizing and women's rights.

His analysis is based on a study of 2,784 participants in 28 major scientific controversies in the past 400 years. He included major developments in science, as well as some obscure ones. The main criterion was whether enough remained in the historical record about the scientific debate to evaluate the main participant.

Of the 28 scientific revolutions, 23 were led by later-borns. And in those with a

first-born as the leader — Einstein and Newton, for example — their prominent allies were for the most part later-borns.

"The overall probability that a first-born will support a scientific revolution is 34 per cent; the odds that a late-born will do so are almost double at 64 per cent," Professor Sulloway says.

Judith Blake, a sociologist at the University of California, says: "I am sceptical of any reported effect for birth order. People get excited by the idea of birth order, but when you look at it scientifically, it evaporates."

In July, she published data showing that for 113,000 people, the order of birth made no difference in how far they went in school or how intelligent they were.

"What matters instead," she says, "is how large a family one comes from. What had seemed to be birth-order effects were artefacts. The real effect was due to parents' characteristics — the lower the social class and the less educated the parents, the bigger the family."

Daniel Goleman

Mapping out vehicle navigation

We soon may be able to throw away our 'A to Z' as we travel from A to B

A NEW car navigation system which offers drivers colour-coded maps of an area and its roads has been developed by engineers. The system, called AVIC-1, allows a driver to select from five levels of detail from fine cartographic detail provided by satellite.

Also included in the display are names and locations of restaurants, hotels and entertainment centres with details on services they provide.

The system was developed by the Japanese Pioneer Electronic Corporation. The system is expected to be

available in June, but will only be marketed in Japan.

At the heart of the AVIC-1 are special compact discs which carry information for the maps and are linked with the vehicle's music system.

The car's location is calculated by satellite which returns the signal via the vehicle's antenna. The location is displayed on a 4-in colour screen as a red dot superimposed on a map.

Pioneer says the system is accurate to within 65-100ft. It can operate when the vehicle is moving or stationary.

The system is expected to sell for just under £2,000.

Toru Yokomizo, a spokesman for Pioneer, says the system could be installed in trucks and helicopters.

The announcement of the new satellite car navigation system comes as the British Government completes licensing procedures for two in-car traffic information and navigation systems in the run-up to their commercial launch.

Trafficmaster, developed by General Logistics, of Luton, Bedfordshire, gives drivers up-to-the-minute information on congested and jammed motorways. It uses infra-red sensors on motorway bridges to monitor traffic flows, beam-

ing details of speeds below 25mph to a central computer. Staff then relay news of trouble spots to subscribers through the VHF radiopaging network. A pager unit in the car decodes the signal and displays information on the unit's screen.

The company plans to have Trafficmaster in operation by August. It will cover an area within a 35-mile radius of London. National coverage is expected to be in under way by spring, 1993.

The other British scheme licensed this week is GEC's Autoguide — a route planner for motorists unfamiliar with their location or with roads on an intended journey.

It is believed the GEC system, set for launch in a few years, could do away with the need for traditional maps.

A Department of Transport spokesman said yesterday that, although only two systems would be licensed this week, the department would consider other proposals.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

New tape puts trade in a spin

Philips' latest audio offering may be welcomed by music buffs, but it is likely to upset industry leaders in Japan

A new type of audio tape, called Digital Compact Cassette (DCC), is expected to be announced by the Dutch electronics company Philips later this month (George Cole and Matthew May write).

The tape will look like an ordinary audio cassette and will play on conventional home hi-fi systems, personal stereos and in-car players. However, it will also carry a hidden digital signal that will give better sound quality on a new generation of digital cassette players.

Although the sound quality of the digital track is not expected to be quite as high as that of a compact disc, it has the twin advantages of being compatible with the current audio tape format and also relatively cheap.

The development of DCC could be good news for audio buffs, but it has already created divisions between European and Japanese electronics companies. The Japanese have produced a rival system known as Digital Audio Tape or DAT. This uses cassettes the size of a credit card to store two hours of high-quality digital sound.

But that is expensive, the players cost about £1,000 and the tape is not compatible with the millions of audio cassette decks already in use. It also means that software companies, which produce music tapes, would have to make two versions of the same cassette.

So far, Philips is refusing to talk about DCC because it is still negotiating with music software companies but, according to one senior Philips manager, DCC will shift the balance of power between Europe and Japan.

"For a long time, whenever Europe has gone into a meet-

ing with Japan, we have been psychologically beaten before we have even sat down. Now the boot is on the other foot," he says.

While Japanese consumer electronics companies are clearly unhappy about DCC, Philips hopes music companies will be more enthusiastic. The music industry has already delayed the launch of DAT in Europe because it feared it would be used to make perfect copies of compact discs.

But Philips is believed to have calmed the music companies' fears by telling them it will build an anti-copy system into the DCC format. The company is also in the music business as it owns the Polygram record company.

Another claim which may wipe out digital audio tape before it even arrives has been made by a designer at the Paisley College of Technology in Scotland who says he has invented a cheap system to produce hiss-free tapes which will work on ordinary cassette recorders and players.

The developer of the new tape, Archie Pettigrew, says it will give virtually the same quality as a compact disc, but will cost little more than normal cassettes.

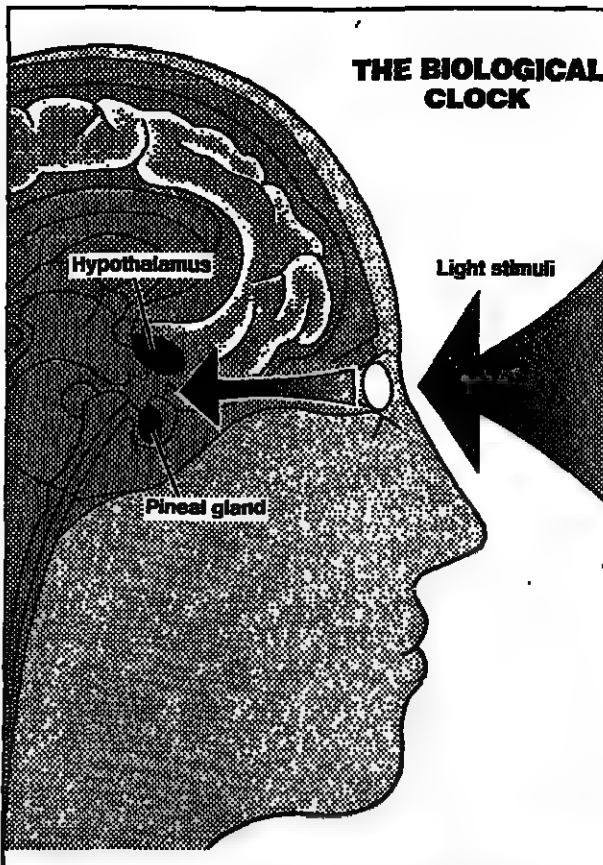
"The hiss is there because of a recording system known as AC biasing which has previously been thought vital to ease distortion," Mr Pettigrew says. "Engineers have never considered recording without it because they believed tapes would be unlistenable if AC biasing wasn't used."

Instead of AC biasing, Mr Pettigrew uses a system called contour biasing, based on mathematical theory. The first examples of the system can be produced if it is used with pre-recorded tapes because the reduced hiss can be heard when they are played on existing cassette machines.

Providing domestic users with decks that can record with the new system should only add about £5 to their cost, Mr Pettigrew says. He is now looking for backers for a new system in the hope that it could be on sale in the shops by Christmas.

Research dispels thinking that human body clocks are insensitive to light

New light on jet lag



The biological clock is situated in the hypothalamus and the pineal gland, which produces the sleep-inducing hormone, melatonin. The hormone is secreted only in darkness, but can be suppressed when light stimuli to the eyes are transmitted along pathways of the brain.

Scientists have succeeded in readjusting the human biological clock in a research project which could help overcome the problems of night shift workers, reduce jet lag, and cut the risk of industrial accidents.

The results of an experiment at Harvard University Medical School, in the United States, are being hailed as a crucial advance by Dr Charles Czeisler, a leading expert in the growing science of "chronobiology". (Pearce Wright and Thomson Prentice write).

The findings, reported in this week's issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, challenge the long-held belief that, unlike most animals and plants, the human body clock is insensitive to light, but is reset by social stimuli.

Dr Czeisler and colleagues showed that exposing volunteers to bright light can induce physiological changes which help shift workers adapt more easily to working at night and sleeping during the day.

The research adds weight to the question of whether industrial and work-related accidents are more prevalent in the early hours of the morning at a time when the alertness of some employees may be diminished.

Eight healthy young men took part in a series of two-week studies at the Centre for Circadian and Sleep Disorders, at Harvard. They reported for "work" at the laboratory, where half of them spent from midnight until 8am sitting at desks in front of very bright fluorescent lights, while the other half sat in normal lighting for the same period.

They had to carry out tasks, including mathematical calculations, to assess their alertness. The "bright-light" group went home to sleep in bedrooms where the windows were draped with material blocking out all daylight, while the others slept in rooms with curtains, but no special window coverings.

Dr Czeisler said that tests of the volunteers' body temperatures, hormones and mental functions showed that the bright-light group adjusted within four nights to their altered shifts, but the others did not.

He said that even after years of permanent night shifts, or a rotation of day, evening and night duties, many workers

fail to adapt physiologically. Consequently, they were at increased risk of heart disease, ulcers, gastro-intestinal illnesses, serious sleep disorders, and infertility problems among women.

Other studies have shown that one in five people cannot tolerate shift work, and that two out of three night workers either had chronic insomnia or admitted to falling asleep on the job at least once a week.

Dr Czeisler's bright-light technique appears to have reset the biological clock, located in the hypothalamus, a tiny area of the brain involved

in the secretion of hormones. Among these is the sleep-inducing substance, melatonin, which is secreted only in darkness and whose production is controlled by the presence or absence of direct-light stimulus to the eyes.

Thus, the bright-light volunteers stayed lively and alert through the night because their melatonin was suppressed, and slept better during the day because the hormone was encouraged by the black-out effects in their bedrooms.

Special office lighting systems and other adjustments could make it easier for night-shift workers to adapt, Dr

Czeisler said. Such improvements could have a profound effect on industrial, and even military, safety.

According to a recent article in *Flight International*, US Air Force pilots flying almost exclusively at night on the top-secret Lockheed F-117A "stealth" fighter became apprehensive of sunrise.

They were anxious about getting to sleep when they landed, and rushed for the shelter of their blacked-out rooms.

"You would have thought you were at a vampire's convention as daybreak approached," a senior Lockheed executive was quoted as saying.

Dr Czeisler is also looking at the implications of his research into the treatment of conventional jet lag, and has discussed with two airlines the question of installing special lights in cabins for long-haul flights.

Harvard researchers believe that passengers can get much the same benefit by spending specific hours in daylight at their destinations.

The same theory is behind the launch last month of a British invention, the Bioclock. This is a pocket-size computer which calculates the precise amount of exposure to daylight which it is said is needed to compensate for the effects of long flights across time zones.

Passengers enter into the £80 device the times of their flight departure and arrival, duration of the trip, and whether the direction is westwards or eastwards.

They can check exactly when they should be in light or shade, say inventors Christine Lenihan and Dr Peter Bick.

At travel across time zones lengthens or shortens passengers' "daytime", confusing the body's timetable and provoking the jet lag symptoms of fatigue, indigestion, lack of concentration and impaired physical responses.

Other researchers are investigating the possibilities of a melatonin pill to overcome jet lag.

Dr Josephine Arendt, of Surrey University, has shown that melatonin treatment benefits volunteer passengers. She is now assessing its effects on men working at Britain's Antarctic research station, where the disappearance of the sun for three months every winter disrupts their circadian rhythms.

Dolphins join navy



An American plan to use trained dolphins as security guards at a nuclear submarine base in Bangor, Washington has been delayed for several months following an agreement between the US Navy and animal rights advocates to conduct environmental studies into their use. The navy was given permission in 1987 to capture as many as 25 dolphins a year without supervision under animal protection laws to train them to protect Trident submarines from underwater intruders. In a separate document, the navy has also agreed to stop capturing the marine mammals until it completes a formal study of the impact of taking dolphins from the wild.

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Cancer deaths

A study of more than 6,000 cancer victims in Sweden has found women had a 22 per cent lower death rate than men from the disease, apparently because female sex hormones prevented cancer from spreading. However, according to the study by the University hospital in Uppsala and published in the *American Medical Association's journal*, the finding is not true for all forms of cancer. The study covered 6,262 Swedes who were diagnosed with cancer before the age of 20 between 1960 and 1984. Before the age of 11 both sexes ran a similar risk of death but after the women became sexually mature, at age 12, their death rate dropped, the study reported.

The full facts

A facsimile machine which can transmit copies in full colour will go on sale in Japan this autumn at a cost of £14,000. But the developer, Sharp, says it has not decided when to sell the machine abroad because of concern that other countries may find it too expensive and may also lack the high quality telephone lines it needs. Japanese advertising agencies, magazines and printers have expressed interest in the new fax as a way to transmit photographs quickly and easily for publication. The machine, which uses a four-colour heat

BRIEFING

sensitive ribbon, takes three minutes to transmit an 8 inch by 10 inch (20cm by 25cm) high quality copy of a colour photograph.

Hacker outcry

As the Private Member's Bill against computer hacking completed its passage through the Commons last Friday, hardliners in America criticized what they saw as too soft a sentence on the infamous US hacker Robert Morris. In November 1988 Mr Morris clogged up thousands of computers and caused millions of dollars worth of damage after releasing a computer "worm" that spread widely over a nationwide network. Last week he was sentenced to 400 hours of community service and a \$10,000 fine under the Computer and Fraud Abuse Act which, similar to its proposed British counterpart, includes the possibility of prison sentences up to five years.

Food dangers

Irradiated food is safe and does not affect taste or smell and will become as common as frozen food, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). The organization argues that research on animals has shown there are no long-term health effects. Food-borne diseases, the organization says, may become the second largest cause of mortality in Europe after respiratory ailments but irradiation was a simple preventative measure.

A fishy find

Two New York entrepreneurs claim to have developed a technique to give chickens the chemical make-up of a fish. The technique will also breed poultry that may help prevent heart disease. Carl Schwartz and Howard Weiss have developed a new chicken feed and a method for administering the feed that they say increases greatly the amount of Omega-3 fatty acids in both the chicken meat and eggs. Researchers have looked at such fatty acids in an effort to explain why heart disease is far less common in parts of the world where people consume a lot of fish.

Matthew May

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Continued on page 43

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

A darker side to those spells in the sun

As more Britons bask in the sun, they increase their risk of developing skin cancers. Thomson Prentice reports on a new method of diagnosis which may reduce the need for distressing biopsies

Last week's heatwave may offer the prospect of a long hot summer, but it also prompts warnings from researchers who are investigating the increase of a potentially fatal form of skin cancer.

Although few people on British beaches may regard the sun as an enemy, melanoma, caused by excessive exposure to the sun's ultraviolet light, leads to about 1,000 deaths a year in this country. It is a serious public health threat in Australia, the United States and South Africa.

The disease can be cured by early diagnosis and treatment, but once the cancer becomes invasive, there is little that can be done to save sufferers.

The majority of victims in Britain are middle-aged women, but the condition is increasing among younger people who have one or more foreign sunbathing holidays

every year. One of the first signs of the disease is moles on the skin which have started to grow, itch or bleed. Dermatologists who examine the moles can form a suspicion about them, but an accurate diagnosis depends on their removal by biopsy and microscopic examination.

However, even in specialist centres, about 30 moles are removed for every one which turns out to be a melanoma. The unnecessary operations cause anxiety to the patient and add to the cost of the health service.

Two doctors at the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead, north west London, believe they have a solution. Dr Amar Dhillon, senior lecturer in pathology, and Dr Malcolm Rustin, a consultant dermatologist, are experimenting with what they believe is an improved method of detecting the early signs of skin cancer.



What price a tan? Young women who spend holidays sunbathing, are most at risk

They have developed a system of computerized image analysis that reveals much more information about suspicious moles.

The system has not been tested on patients yet, but would involve their moles being filmed with a video camera, and the magnified

images projected on to a computer screen. The computer analyses the four features of moles used to identify melanomas clinically: the asymmetry, border, colour and diameter of each mole.

"We hope that the results, by refining clinical criteria, will improve diagnosis and

thereby reduce the number of benign moles which are removed unnecessarily," Dr Dhillon says.

"The primary aim is to allow a better discrimination between benign moles and those that are clinically suspicious. We think there is considerable scope for reduc-

tion of the anxieties and costs involved in unnecessary biopsies." The system is still some way from being available to patients. Dr Dhillon and Dr Rustin are hoping to get funding for a three-year trial of the technique, involving 500 patients a year, costing about £60,000.

In the trial, patients with suspicious moles will be examined both in the conventional way and using image analysis, and the diagnoses will be confirmed through biopsy. The results of the two methods will then be compared to see whether the computer system is more accurate.

The doctors predict that the rising incidence of the disease is likely to continue, as more people indulge in more sunbathing and as the depletion of the Earth's ozone layer allows more ultraviolet sunlight through.

"The current methods of assessing early possible signs of melanoma are inadequate," Dr Dhillon says.

"We have to try to produce improvements." Their views are shared by Malcolm Greaves, professor of dermatology at St Thomas's Hospital, in south London.

Physicians of London, he says: "Because of the progressively increasing proportion of the population in the over-60s, skin problems consequent upon ageing, and therefore partly attributable to sun exposure, are going to represent an expanding burden on the skin clinic."

"The increase in melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer is only partly due to increased longevity. Increased exposure to the sun's rays due to reduction of the ozone layer, and changes in leisure are also major factors."

"The dermatologist and the dermatological nurse are in the front line; both must sharpen their diagnostic acumen and increase the scope of the diagnostic and therapeutic techniques they provide."

"They should also make use of the media to promote awareness and encourage early diagnosis."

Professor Greaves says that dermatological research in Britain and in other European countries is carried out on a relatively small scale.

"National and European grant-awarding bodies and specialist associations must use their influence to pool and integrate resources nationally and internationally to form centres of research excellence," he says.

Hi-tech to the East

PROPOSALS to relax the restrictions on the export of advanced technology to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe announced last week by the United States Government are likely to be far reaching, (Matthew May writes).

The plans will be considered at the next meeting of Cocom, the 17-nation body which controls the list of high-technology items restricted from export. The only argument is expected to be whether or not the plans go far enough. Thirty of the 120 categories now on the list would be removed and 13 more would be partially lifted.

The result would mean that almost any personal computer could be exported anywhere. This is an area where European and US manufacturers have consistently argued that restrictions have meant only lost business opportunities, as such machines are widely available on the world market. Larger computers that can process up to 275 megabits of data a second - four times the present limit - would also be dropped from restriction.

For Eastern European countries moving towards democratic reforms, the US is suggesting that requests for computers used in banking, travel and publishing should get favourable consideration.

JOBSGENE

Engineer's title role confusion

IT experts seeking recognition of their skills face the question of qualification

Information technology experts could become chartered engineers if the British Computer Society (BCS) is successful in its attempts to become a nominated body of the Engineering Council. The move is part of a drive within the industry to formalize the practice of developing software and, if successful, BCS would be able to confer the title of chartered engineer on IT practitioners.

Membership of the BCS remains one of the few avenues open to IT practitioners to gain formal recognition for their skills. The engineer title - already being conferred informally on certain categories of software developers - is causing confusion.

Companies are advertising for software engineers and some are now also referring to information engineers. Most are seeking staff with experience of developing systems using structured or formal methods, although few firms state a preference for any particular qualification.

Some see these titles as little more than a new hat for an old job. Others argue that the engineer title indicates the practitioner's ability to develop software using specific methods or principles.

Others seek to draw a distinction between software engineers - those who produce the system - and information engineers who define the solution, but leave it to the software engineers to construct.

Yet others see the information engineer as a description applicable to those using computer-aided software engineering (CASE) products to both define the system and automatically generate it from the original specification on powerful work stations.

"We have had to create a new category of IT staff called

information engineers to draw a distinction from consultants or analysts," says David Fairbairn, the managing director of James Martin Associates (0784 245 058).

"Information engineers are a combination of the analyst and designer. An information engineer will work with the user to define the system and then create the software using CASE technology on work-stations."

These titles throw the existing hierarchy into some confusion and blur the boundaries between job functions.

John Kirkham, consultant to the Department of Trade and Industry's Software Engineering Solutions programme, says: "The old titles of programmer and analyst do not apply anymore, and the engineer title reflects the technique of designing systems formally."

"The business analyst is now seen as an information engineer - someone who analyses the business problem and decides what system is needed. The software engineer constructs it. But information engineering encompasses software engineering - there is no black-and-white divide."

Companies are recruiting from different backgrounds to spearhead the new breed of information and software engineers. Scientists, with their formal training, are seen as having the ideal skills for making use of the latest generation of CASE techniques and engineering approaches.

Oracle, the software supplier, is looking to recruit a number of PhD graduates in unrelated subjects to develop business software applications for customers. "We are using structured engineering techniques in building software and scientific training helps in terms of a methodical approach to planning and defining applications," says Alan Hovell, Oracle's recruitment manager (0344 860066).

He says one reason is that many existing analysts have little training in formal methods and the industry needs to recruit outside traditional areas to make up the shortfall of expertise.

Leslie Tilley

First blinks of eye on the sky

AS GROUND controllers struggle to reprogram the communications system of the Hubble Space Telescope to overcome the trouble caused by an obstruction to one of its antennae, its counterpart on the ground is yielding results, (Pearce Wright reports).

The latest and most powerful earth-bound instrument is the New Technology Telescope (NTT) which has been installed by the eight-nation European Southern Observatory organization, at its 2400m mountain-top site at La Silla, in Chile. One of the prime purposes of the NTT, which cost \$14 million (£5.2 million) to build, will be the observation of very faint and distant galaxies.

Initial tests have concentrated on the scrutiny of known stars and galaxies, with intriguing findings. The details outlined in *The Messenger*, the organization's quarterly bulletin, include a

description of the "light echo", a phenomenon generated by a supernova explosion in February 1987, the first naked-eye supernova explosion seen in 400 years. The "light echo" that followed the first sighting of this dramatic event was the discovery of a ring of light reflected from inter-stellar dust clouds.

Detailed pictures of that echo, still spreading across the sky in the southern hemisphere, have been obtained together with the clearest images yet seen of an object known as the "Peculiar Galaxy" that has baffled astronomers. The clarity of the new images is proof of the idea of active optics pioneered at the NTT by a team working with Dr Raymond Wilson, the organization's senior optical scientist. Advances in automation and remote control will allow long-distance observations with the NTT by astronomers in Europe.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Crofters join the electronic village

A £16 million project to lower telecommunications costs and provide high-quality services will lead to a new type of worker in Scotland's rural areas - the "electronic crofter".

The first advanced communications network in the project will begin operating this month, offering users the chance to deal with big commercial centres in the UK and Europe for a fraction of the previous cost.

The project, by the Scottish Highlands and Islands Development Board (HIDB), is expected eventually to provide homes and special village centres with fast, high-quality digital communications facilities for voice, computer data and image traffic. These will be as good as those available to commercial conglomerates.

John Lough, telecommunications consultant for the HIDB, says the new "electronic crofter" will work from home, using new technology to establish links with businesses which were previously impossible because of the high cost of telephone charges.

Computer links will be made available between the region and the rest of the country. These will be available for the cost of a local

Communications promise to revive rural fortunes,

Leslie Tilley reports

telephone call. This is expected to boost electronic transmission of work to and from communities in remote areas. The cost of exchanging information with an employer in London, for example, will be as cheap as if the user were phoning from a London suburb.

Rural councils and action groups believe the new technology will help reverse the gradual decline of the countryside - particularly the falling number of businesses and the exodus of young people.

A number of projects are being developed by organisations such as the HIDB, the Rural Development Commission (RDC) and British Telecom. The Highlands and Islands scheme will provide the remote area with the first operational Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) available to the public.

More than 40 exchanges in

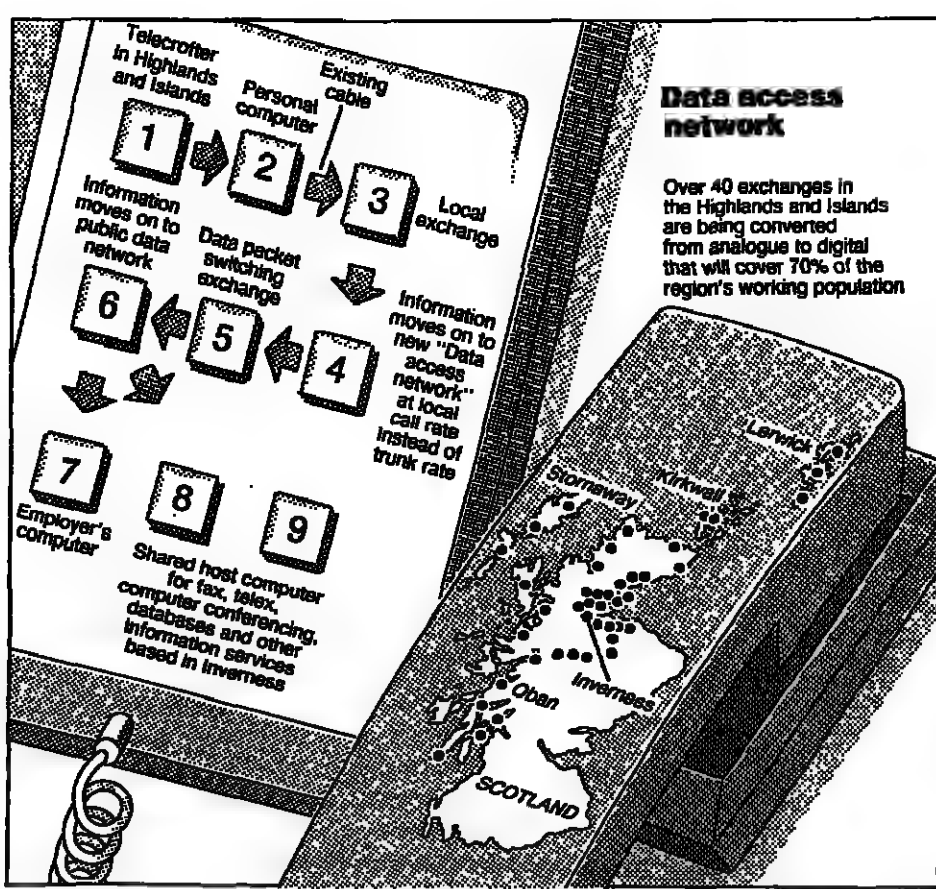
the Highlands and Islands are being converted from analogue to digital in a move that will benefit 70 per cent of the region's working population. The system is expected to open in July. Urban centres in Britain are not expected to have similar facilities until early next year.

The first development in the Highlands and Islands this month will offer connections to a public data network for the cost of a local call. From August, the network will charge 3p a minute to send computer information anywhere in the country.

The HIDB has invested £4.9 million in the project which, British Telecom says, would have been unlikely to go ahead without the additional funding. The project is expected to create at least 300 jobs.

Along with British Telecom and the Scottish Development Agency, the HIDB is backing a network of "electronic crofters" being set up by just Krabshuis, an information services manager based in the Mull of Kintyre. People throughout the Highlands will then be employed from home, using the network to work for firms located elsewhere.

Similar developments are taking place on a smaller scale



elsewhere in Britain. "Telecottages" are established as community centres offering computers and office equipment to residents. A more recent innovation, the "telebusiness", aims at establishing a number of businesses in one building, supported by a central office centre with telecommunications facilities. Both are developments of "telecommuting" - a term used to describe people working from home, mostly with computers

or facsimile machines linked by telephone to an urban employer. The Peak Park Trust is awaiting planning permission to convert a derelict farm in Hope Valley, Derbyshire, into the first "telebusiness" in the UK. It is expected to be established by 1991 at a cost of £380,000. "This is the tip of a major revolution for the countryside," Godfrey Cliff, director of the trust, says. "Our scheme is geared to economic

regeneration by creating quality jobs to retain young people." The first British "telecottage" has been set up in a disused library at a school in Warslow, Staffordshire, with the financial backing of the Staffordshire County Council, RDC and British Telecom. Computers and other office machinery are available, initially free of charge, to community members, or on a commercial basis to local entrepreneurs.



Heated agreement: Braithwaite, Burnett and two helpers

A heating technique under investigation offers hope for farmers and the elderly

A MICROWAVE cooking technique, being tested as a way of preventing new-born farm animals from perishing in cold weather, may also offer a low-cost way of keeping elderly people warm in retirement homes, scientists believe.

Leah Braithwaite, a Canadian veterinary research worker who has been involved in a five-year study of the technique, says findings from animals and humans suffering from hypothermia indicate that very low-powered microwave treatment was both harmless and cost effective.

The team stresses that the prototype microwave unit uses a very low power output of only 40 to 50 watts compared to conventional micro-

Warming waves

waves for cooking which have a power rating of around 600 watts, which would be too powerful and highly dangerous.

Tests with piglets and chicks kept at artificially cool temperatures have demonstrated that the animals chose the microwave warming as much as they did conventional heating or infrared warmth.

Importantly, however, the amount of energy needed to make the piglets and chicks comfortable was significantly less when microwaves were used, the scientists found.

There is evidence that when microwaves were used to heat the living quarters of retirement homes, where residents are highly susceptible to the cold, fuel bills could be cut by as much as half. "Microwaves could be used to keep the elderly people warmer than the staff around them," says Miss Braithwaite.

The benefits of microwaves have come from a five-year research programme at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada. Miss Braithwaite, a member of the Canadian team, is now collaborating with researchers

at the Scottish Agricultural College's Centre for Rural Building in Aberdeen. The project hopes to develop a unit for British farms.

The device on trial at the centre can quickly "defrost" at-risk lambs. Traditional methods farmers use include putting the new-born lambs in very low-heat cookers, or shining heat lamps on them. However, the fleece acts as an insulation barrier, and these methods often fail.

"There is a fair bit of work to be done yet to make sure the system is foolproof, but the tests carried out so far this lambing season are very encouraging," George Burnett, the centre's development officer, says.

Nick Nuttall

SCIENCE REPORT

Just scratching fossil surfaces

Of the many peculiar life forms that have come and gone during the Earth's history, few are stranger than those habitually described by palaeontologist Simon Conway Morris, of Cambridge University.

But even a connoisseur of the off-beat as experienced by Mr Conway Morris is puzzled by the enigmatic fossil creature *Typhloesus*, which he discusses in a recent issue of *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (vol. B 327, pp 595-624). "That animal still has me completely stumped," he says.

Typhloesus, known from 320 million-year-old deposits in Montana, was a swimmer, about the same size and shape as a goldfish. But there the similarity ends. This apparently eyeless creature had no fins except for a stiff, rudder-like tail. Its mouth, at the front, led via a broad gullet to an enormous, bag-like stomach that took up most of the body cavity. Unusually, the gut was blind: the *Typhloesus* lacked an anus. Beneath the gut was an odd, wheel-shaped organ of unknown purpose, called the ferrodiscus. Scientists do know, though, what the animal ate. Several specimens contain in their guts the distinctive teeth of another group of oddities, the conodonts.

For decades, conodonts were known only from their teeth. Although these teeth are common, nobody had any idea what the rest of the animal looked like. The puzzle was as if the existence of humanity was betrayed solely by several thousand sets of dentures.

When *Typhloesus* was discovered, in 1969, complete with conodont teeth in the middle, researchers thought that the teeth were actually part of it, and the conodont problem had been

solved. *Typhloesus* (with teeth) was cast as a chordate, a member of the large group of animals to which humans also belong.

But doubt soon set in, reinforced by the discovery in 1980s by the discovery in Scotland of several long, worm-like fossils with conodont teeth at the front. These were more plausible conodont animals than *Typhloesus*, and probably akin to chordates.

Researchers still have no idea whether *Typhloesus* was related to chordates or, in fact, to any other known group: nevertheless, as Mr Conway Morris says, it must be related to something, however distantly.

Mr Conway Morris has made a career out of describing the bizarre. As a student, he described the many fossil animals collected from the 540 million-year-old Burgess Shales in the Canadian Rockies. His partners were Harry Whittington, of Cambridge University, and Derek Briggs, now at Bristol University. Many of these fossil crea-

tures were so strange that they could not be accommodated in any modern group of animals.

But the Burgess Shales have no monopoly on strangeness: the fossil record is peppered with creatures that defy interpretation. *Typhloesus* is just one.

Others are known from the 300 million-year-old Mazon Creek shales in Illinois, along with several kinds of fossil lampreys (themselves very peculiar). One Mazon Creek oddball is *Tullimonstrum*, a fishlike animal with eyes on long stalks and a snout like a bottle brush. Mr Conway Morris describes it as "the granddaddy of all these bizarre animals".

Henry Gee

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Continued from page 40

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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If you are interested and have a 2-3 years' experience in the medical field (or equivalent) including English Language or English/Lit, you can offer a salary of £10,000 to £11,000 (incl. LW and Local Pay Addition) plus a 4% pension supplement. (Salary under review - new rates applicable from 1 April 1990). Other benefits include season ticket loan and flexi-hours. For further information and an application form please phone 071-637 6627. Closing date is 22 May 1990. Medical Research Council, 20 Park Crescent, London W1. The MRC is an equal opportunities employer.

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HOCKEY

Goalless England in world semi-final against the Dutch

From Joyce Whitehead
Sydney

ENGLAND reached the semi-finals of the women's World Cup here yesterday. They played a goalless draw with Australia, the top seeds, to end pool A with the same number of points, Australia taking first place on goal difference.

The match was good and straightforward. Both teams were anxious to win, but were just as fearful of losing because the West Germans sat in the stands waiting to take their place in the semi-finals if either lost.

The England defence was magnificent, especially Vickie Dixon, Jill Atkins and Kathryn Edwards, who had nine stitches in a cut beneath her eye on Tuesday. They did not allow the Australians to play the game they wanted but had difficulty in getting the England attack away. Mary Nevill, at right defence, has seldom played better.

The Australians marked closely, but they seemed reluctant to try to get free. England had a frightening moment towards the end of the first

RESULTS: Pool A: Australia 0, England 0, West Germany 1, Argentina 1, China 1, Japan 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Australia	5	4	1	0	10	3	8
England	5	3	2	0	9	4	7
West Germany	5	3	1	1	10	5	7
China	5	2	2	1	7	6	5
Argentina	5	1	3	1	5	10	3
Japan	5	1	1	3	4	12	3

RESULTS: Pool B: Netherlands 2, Canada 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Netherlands	5	4	1	0	11	3	8
South Korea	5	3	2	0	10	4	7
New Zealand	5	3	1	1	10	5	7
Spain	5	2	2	1	7	6	5
Canada	5	1	3	1	5	10	3
United States	5	1	1	3	4	12	3

RESULTS: Pool C: Netherlands 2, Canada 0.

half, when Dixon was involved in a skirmish in the goal circle; Australia were awarded a penalty stroke, but Sally Carbon failed to score and equilibrium was restored. Australia created more pressure than England and missed two open goals and the ball frequently got bogged down on one side of the pitch. But the England defence had things well under control.

Today is a rest day and the cross-over matches start tomorrow with England playing Netherlands and Australia meeting South Korea.

ENGLAND: J. Thompson, A. Sowerby, K. Brown, S. Lester (captain), J. Atkins, V. Dixon, K. Edwards, J. Nevill, C. Brown (sub), T. Fry, K. Edwards, J. Sowerby.

AUSTRALIA: M. Ryan, L. Toole, L. Downham, M. Ryan, A. Pook, K. Smith (sub), L. Capen, S. Carbon, J. Perkins, J. Sowerby, R. Howard, S. Buchanan (captain).

● The most important of the other games for England was that between West Germany and Argentina, which the Germans easily won 3-1. An Argentinian success would have removed the West Germans from the scramble at the top. Tania Diehschled and Christine Perneck (two) scored the German goals; Gabriela Pazos replied for the losers.

Netherlands coasted to a 2-0 win over Canada, who might have scored on several occasions including two penalty strokes. This result leaves Netherlands top of pool B and Korea second.

China and Japan drew 1-1. Neither stopped moving in an attractive game that entailed tactical stick work, but the two splendid goalkeepers left little opportunity for goals. Each side attacked at every opportunity but in the final minutes tempers got frayed.

Overcoming high handicap to clear the hurdle

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



At full stretch: Ridgeon takes a break during training at Crystal Palace this week to ponder over his return to action in Spain next Thursday

Ridgeon now ready to resume business

By David Powell
Athletics Correspondent

FIVE hours a day, every day, month after month, undergoing physiotherapy gives a man time to think. One conclusion Jonathan Ridgeon reached was that, should he ever recover from his chronic injury, he would become a full-time athlete. Repaired and rejuvenated, he will be back on the shop floor next week trying to get his old job back.

Ridgeon was the one who kept spoiling the fun Colin Jackson was having. A part-time 110 metres hurdler, he may have been, but a world championship silver medal in 1987 was better than Jackson could manage.

British male athlete of the year in 1987 was better than Jackson could manage. A time of 13.29sec, twice that year, was better than Jackson could manage.

But then Ridgeon was made redundant although, as a Cambridge University student, there was still reason to get up in the morning. An Achilles tendon injury threatened to terminate forever his employment as an inter-

national competitor. "I had to have 20 per cent of my Achilles tendon removed in an operation which gives you probably no more than a 50-50 chance of running again," Ridgeon said.

There is a 50 per cent out there still limping because Ridgeon is doing just fine. More than that, he is going to be faster than ever. His words: "I think I will run better than I did in 1987. I was a boy of 20 then but now I am 23 and a lot stronger."

Jackson's 13.08sec European record at the Commonwealth Games in January was no more than Ridgeon was expecting. "Colin has done very well but he has remained injury-free for two years," Ridgeon said. "In 1987, he was third behind me in the world championships in 13.38sec at the age of 20."

He ran 13.08sec in 1990 at the age of nearly 23. That is the progression you expect, and I would have done exactly the same had I not been injured.

Ridgeon's first high hurdles race since the world championship final will be on the outskirts of Bilbao next Thursday, the first of four tests in

Spain before he returns to Britain for his attempt to secure a place in the team for the European championships.

The competition for jobs is greater than it used to be. Tony Jarrett, a junior apprentice in 1987, is medal-winning material in any championship now. David Nelson was third in the Commonwealth Games, and there are others.

"It is better to come back into a red-hot event than a soft one because it is all about competition and improving yourself," Ridgeon said. "I am a lot stronger than I used to be. Technically, I am a little better."

Ridgeon had his operation last June but, concerned at his slow recovery in Britain, he turned to Australia for assistance. In return for giving coaching, he was nursed back to health at the Institute of Sport in Canberra.

"I went over at the end of November and we thought that seven weeks would be enough to get me completely recovered," he said. "But it was worse than we thought and I stayed for 4½ months. I needed that amount of rehabilitation to build up the tendon."

Ridgeon, in contrast with the majority of the groaning injured, who complain that the standard of medical support in Britain is a distant second to the quality of service they provide their country with, carries no resentment that he was left to seek, and pay for, his own recovery.

"Track and field is a sport about what you are doing on the track. Why should they bother?" he said. "There are plenty of good athletes who are running, so why worry about the crippled ones?"

"In Australia, they pay for their athletes to fly to the Institute of Sport. I had to do everything off my own bat."

Ridgeon says that he will be "coming in at a pretty high level" next week. By that, he means opening with a time in the region of 13.70sec and finishing his Spanish tour with 13.50 or slightly quicker.

"I will run better than ever this year but it would be unrealistic, after 1½ years off, to be thinking of the 12.9s. I hope to run 13.20sec," he said.

If I set out to be No. 1 straight away, I will be disappointed. Colin and Roger Kingdom are a tough act to beat."

Jackson believes Ridgeon will need a season to get back into it. "Next year, I think you will see him running a lot better than this year," Jackson said. "It's going to be very difficult for him. The field in Britain is now loaded. When he left, there was just him and myself."

Having moved home from Burwell, Cambridge, to Clapham, south London, Ridgeon is 15 minutes from the Crystal Palace track. "Now I am a full-time athlete, it is convenient," he said.

"For years, I dabbled in athletics because I always had other things like academia. It was about time I did what my rivals do."

Next week will be "pretty damn scary" when Ridgeon settles into his blocks. But the overalls are washed and ready, even if they do not carry a sponsor's name any more. His last one abandoned him, unimpressed by the time off he was taking.

It will not be long, though, before the businessmen are crowding the shop floor with offers of a better deal. Ridgeon's production line is faster than most.

SWIMMING

Leeds pair to stay in charge

CONTROL of the British team will stay in the hands of the two men who run the City of Leeds development scheme unit, and including the Barcelona Olympic Games (Craig Lord writes).

The Amateur Swimming Federation of Great Britain has selected Terry Denison and Paul Bush to continue in their roles as head coach and team manager respectively for the European championships in Athens next summer and the Olympic Games in 1992. Denison is to miss the world championships in Perth, Australia, in January because of family commitments.

Barcelona will be the fourth Olympics at which the Yorkshireman has travelled as a team coach. Two of the assistant coaches there will be Bob Park and Jim Park.

SPORT FOR THE DISABLED

Bowling along on the bocchia boom

By Jane Wyatt

BOCCIA, a ball-tossing game with origins in ancient Greece, is enjoying a modern surge in popularity, both in this country and abroad. A very similar game was played throughout the Roman empire, and its closest relatives today are lawn bowls and boules.

The main difference between bocchia and other mainstream bowling games is that it is played with soft, pliable balls which can easily be held and thrown, bowled or kicked - if necessary, using assistive devices like gutting or ramps.

The skill required to play a successful ball, in relation to the jack, is deceptive as the balls have a peculiar rolling or kinetic quality.

Bocchia was included as a Paralympic sport for the first

time at Seoul in 1988, and is now regarded as having "come of age".

At international level, the sport is specific to those with cerebral palsy (CPs). However, it can be played by anyone, able bodied or disabled, almost regardless of functional ability.

The newly formed National Bocchia Association has the support of the sport and recreation wing of the Spastics Society, Cerebral Palsy Sport (CP Sport). The organizations are liaising to provide better coaching and facilities for the huge resources of potential participants.

Teaching courses to introduce the game to more players, and coaching courses to train much-needed instructors, are being held around the country this year.

SPORTS LETTERS

Caring for the customers

From Mr Christopher Drew
Sir, I read Simon Barnes' article (April 28) about the loss of 9,000 seats at Lord's with a wry smile. My recent experience would indicate that MCC are not interested in retaining the paying customer.

I and a friend purchased entrance tickets for the second day of the match between MCC and Worcestershire and were surprised to find that, although posters outside suggested admission to the stands, the part of the Mound Stand which afforded any shelter from the elements was roped off. Members, of course, could use the pavilion and other exclusive covered seating.

Shortly before lunch a heavy shower sent the small crowd scurrying for cover. We sought refuge in the roped-off area of the new stand, whereupon an army of stewards appeared to ensure that we were forced to stand in the rain. Noticeably on their way to eject us none of them took any notice of our committing the very offence we were accused of!

The very essence of cricket in mid-April is a requirement for shelter. I would suggest MCC should apply greater thought to the public because if they do not, their new facilities, however plush, will be empty as paying spectators will have elected to go elsewhere.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER DREW,
30 Downs Road,
Willingdon,
East Sussex.

Sports Letters may be sent by fax to 071-782 5046

League must act against Leeds

From Mr Robert Hick
Sir, This month sees the fifth anniversary of the events which brought English clubs' expulsion from European competitions, and how do some choose to mark that undesirable milestone? They try, in effect, to get us a tenth anniversary.

What could have gone more right, perhaps? UEFA has a new president who says he wants English clubs back in Europe next season - including Liverpool. We bid what must be a rather joyous farewell to his predecessor and the door is wide open.

Then Leeds United's supporters come and shut it, though I would not describe them as supporters - the latter go to make up the football.

The Football League must take action and nothing would do our case for re-entry into Europe more good. If UEFA saw them making an example of Leeds United, perhaps they would realise that hooliganism is abhorred in England as well. My own preference is for the automatic relegation to the third division.

It would be sad for the true supporter, but theirs must be the price paid for solving this crisis. Yours faithfully,
ROBERT HICK,
John's College,
Grove Road South,
Southsea, Hampshire.

From Mr W. P. Goss
Sir, It is not self-evident that any decision which concerns the return of English clubs to European competitions must not be made before the imminent World Cup finals in Italy?

To make such a decision, of whatever content, would remove all constraint on the behaviour of the mindless belligerents who will find their way to Italy, and either excesses

More English bad manners

From Dr Stephen Henry
Sir, All praise to Bath rugby football club for winning the Pilkington Cup again with such a fine display of skill and organisation. Along with our golfers, these amateur sportsmen would appear to be the last representatives of the values lost in many other games in the pursuit of self-obsessed professionalism.

How then intensely disappointing to their supporters, officials and their opposition, waiting in vain on the lovely ground at Monkton Combe School, that the players failed to show up for a well publicised and confirmed May Day bank holiday cricket match or to communicate in any way their "sudden" unavailability.

In due course I am sure we shall receive a suitably worded apology, but there can be little excuse for such a fine example of current English manners and the loutish arrogance we have come to expect only from other sports.

Yours sincerely,
STEPHEN HENRY (President, Mayflies Cricket Club),
Denbie,
Victoria Road,
Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

Local loyalties
From Mr Eric F. Vick
Sir, David Hands's advice (May 7) that Gloucester Rugby Club need to broaden their playing base will, I hope, be ignored by the club selectors. By tradition players have been drawn from the many local clubs in and around the city. This, over the years, has provided some of the best amateur rugby possible, giving pleasure to thousands of local supporters. If, as David Hands suggests, we have to headhunt players from all over the UK to be the bridesmaid, we will remain the bridesmaid.

Yours faithfully,
ERIC F. VICK,
Fairview House,
Hardwicke,
Gloucester.

Potable reds
From Mr P. R. Layton
Sir, I am sure that your snooker correspondent was right in warning against "missing potable reds" (April 28). No less a player than Steve Davis attributed his defeat in a previous championship to "sitting down too long and drinking too much water".

Mr Portwood, as a wine merchant, has done much to help snooker players and others avoid this distressing error by his list (Sports Letters, May 3). Would he agree with me in adding Côte du Rhône or does he take the view that this falls in the quaffable rather than the potable category?

Yours faithfully,
P. R. LAYTON,
Rocks Forge,
Main Road,
Knockholt,
Sevenoaks, Kent.

Perpetuating racial stereotypes

From Mr David Bedford
Sir, Whilst most people are aware that racial elements can be found in many walks of life, the BBC programme *The Race Game* must be the most one-sided programme, short of party political broadcasts, I have seen.

I would not try to speak for other sports although at most levels sports club activities and community service cannot be split.

As chairman of an athletics club, Shaftesbury Barnet Harriers, I am proud that we have been a former international and an active club athlete responsible for team management. The fact they are black is irrelevant, the fact they are giving service is relevant. There is a similar situation with my country, Middlesex, which has had a black president.

From time to time perhaps athletes may be victims of incompetence, but never racism. Whilst incompetence is dangerous, I believe that UK athletics does not have a problem.

Athletics is an individual sport and athletes, as most sports, usually try to blame others for failure. That is human nature but it's nothing to do with prejudice.

DAVE BEDFORD,
67 Theobalds Road,
Borehamwood, Hertfordshire.

From Mr Andrew Lyons
Sir, The makers of *Inside Story: The Race Game*, transmitted by

A richer mixture
From Mr D. N. McCarthy
Sir, Brian Clough is quoted (early edition, April 28) as saying: "I've never felt that our national side has mirrored the excellence of our League clubs. I don't know why." Surely the reason is obvious? The best players have been drawn from a rich mixture of Celtic flair, Anglo-Saxon solidity and (latterly) Afro-Caribbean brilliance. By declining to field one British Isles (or at least, United Kingdom) team in major competitions such as the World Cup, we greatly reduce not merely the amount, but also the diversity, of talent available to represent British football in any one team at the highest level.

Doubtless, if Germany and Italy had likewise reduced their chances - by fielding separate teams to represent Bavaria, Saxony, Lombardy, Tuscany, etc. - their World Cup record would be as dismal as that of our home countries. Apart from one (home) success for England in 1966, how often (if at all) has a British team reached even the semi-finals of the World Cup? The German and Italians regularly reach that stage of the competition, at the very least.

Of course, our preference in these islands to divide and lose, rather than unite to win, is also evident (though to a lesser extent) on the rugby union field. On their too infrequent tours in the southern hemisphere, the Lions often perform creditably enough; but sadly, when the All

Blackness come here, instead of being tested by a four-match series against the British Isles, they are given the far easier task of picking off all, or some, of the home countries, one by one. Significantly, it is often the fixture against the Barbarians, which provides visiting New Zealand teams with their toughest matches (the Barbarians team is often strikingly similar to that of the Lions).

I would be very surprised if Scotland's imminent rugby tour of New Zealand does not produce results which fall short of those which could be expected of a Lions side. Likewise, a Scottish or English progression to the World Cup soccer final, would also come as a delightful surprise. Perhaps Jack Charlton's Republic of Ireland would be a better bet - for here perhaps is the team which comes closest to that ideal blend of all that is best in the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon temperaments.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MCCARTHY BROWN,
Mole End, Burcot,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire.

Staying at one end
From Mr D. A. Woods
Sir, In televising the Test matches and other cricket this summer, I sincerely hope that the BBC will revert to the use of one main camera at one end.

The practice of constantly switching to behind the bowler's arm gives a most distorted impression of the play. Yours faithfully,
D. A. WOODS,
63 Gilmirkirk Road, Belfast.

Yesterday's racing results

Chester

2.15 (6) 1. CRYSTAL JACK (Don McKeown, 12-4), 2. Rhythmic Dancer (J. Carroll, 5-4), 3. Arcturian (S. Causton, 15-8), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

2.45 (11) 1. WARRIOR PRINCE (S. Causton, 5-4), 2. Rhythmic Dancer (J. Carroll, 5-4), 3. Arcturian (S. Causton, 15-8), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

3.15 (11) 1. TRAVELLING LIGHT (A. Murre, 6-2), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

3.45 (11) 1. PHAROS (M. Roberts, 25-1), 2. Rhythmic Dancer (J. Carroll, 5-4), 3. Arcturian (S. Causton, 15-8), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

4.15 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

4.45 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

5.15 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

5.45 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

6.15 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

6.45 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

7.15 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

7.45 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 5. Warrior Prince (S. 5-4), 6. ALPS RAN (A. Amey, 4-6), 7. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 8. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 9. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 10. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 11. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1), 12. Lure of Waterlilies (T. 27-1).

8.15 (11) 1. WATER WELL (M. Roberts, 8-1), 2. Rambo (S. 10-1), 3. Champion's Peak (M. Roberts, 10-1), 4. ALPS RAN (

SPORT

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Europe wants legal pledges from England

From David Miller
Chief Sports Correspondent
Göteborg

LENNART Johansson, the president of UEFA, the European football union, yesterday spelled out the terms under which his executive committee might allow English clubs back into European competition next autumn. The door is not closed, but it is only conditionally ajar.

In an exclusive interview, given to the *Times* before the Cup Winners' Cup final last night, Johansson made it clear that guarantees would be needed from Colin Moynihan, the Minister for Sport, on legal provisions to be undertaken by the Home Office and Foreign Office, irrespective of a problem-free World Cup by followers of England. The latter, in my opinion, is highly improbable.

Johansson, the Swedish elected last month as president of the governing body of European football, said: "I have never personally been emphatic one way or the other. I am going to London to talk with the minister and officials of the Football Association and Football League, hoping to be given answers on critical issues, before the meeting of our executive committee in Vienna in two weeks' time."

"The problem of football violence cannot be solved by doing nothing. Of course, the final responsibility rests with UEFA, but before any decision is taken we should listen to those in England and discover how far they are prepared to share responsibility with us."

"If the British Government is proposing to take all possible legal steps within its ability, on security abroad and at home on high-risk matches, and if the FA and Football League convince us they too are ready, then the answer could be yes."

Johansson was dismayed to learn of the lack of co-operation between the police and football authorities at the match between Bournemouth and Leeds last Saturday, given all the warning signs, including that emphasized in *The Times* following the invasion of the Leeds pitch by 5,000 spectators at the end of their match against Leicester the previous weekend.

"The match was still played as if nothing could happen," Johansson said in evident astonishment. "There is not such a difference in football violence in The Netherlands and Italy, except that their authorities react as if the worst may happen at every match."

"Football has become almost compared with a war. Yet I do not believe we should give up. It will cost a lot to find the solution, but it would cost even more to society to allow a minority to kill off football. We must be positive. Even if we were to close all football, the trouble-makers would simply go somewhere else."

Johansson considered that if Moynihan and the FA, as expected, request that UEFA delays the decision until the end of the World Cup, the executive committee might establish alternative decisions in the event of trouble, re-entry in the absence of it.

Administration requires a clear procedure because the draw for the European club competitions takes place only three days after the World Cup final. Johansson presumed the English would request readmission if massive Italian police control proved effective.

Following the agreement on Tuesday by the Football League to concede to the Association of Chief Police Officers the right to switch the date and place of fixtures for safer crowd control, Johansson is to propose the same condition for European competitions. Home clubs will have to obtain the guarantee of sufficient police manpower or the match will be moved to a larger town.

In other words, if Manchester United or Liverpool were drawn, say, against Aarhus in Denmark or a Luxembourg club, the match could be moved to Copenhagen or Brussels. If Norwich were to play Ajax, the home leg might have to be moved to an English city with greater police strength.

"This must be the system," Johansson said. "Clubs and cities have to share the responsibility with us. They collectively receive

millions of pounds in benefit, and they must share the cost to eliminate the problems. There will always be fight at football. Heysel was the product of many errors.

"Although I am ultimately responsible in European football, we have to do something together: or give in to a minority of a few thousand. I want to be positive without being naive."

Johansson privately regretted the decision in England, following the Taylor report, to remove or reduce many of the fences keeping the crowd off the pitch; he believed that electronically-controlled safety gates, released by one press of a button, would be preferable. Police control, he argued, had to be supplemented by foolproof structural restrictions.

Moreover, he said, police could and should be more effective. "When English spectators arrived

in Sweden last autumn for the World Cup qualifying match, the trouble-makers were there among the rest. Yet they were allowed to start smashing windows in the city centre. The Stockholm police should be able to handle 300 trouble-makers."

With many years in the game, Johansson is not immune to the underlying motivation of those, including those besides the English, who claim that European football needs them as much as the English need European competition. There is an inherent danger in this philosophy. As Gerhard Aigner, the UEFA general secretary, said: "In reality, little has changed in the last five years."

Johansson, a reasonable man, said: "I have an open mind." Johansson's very openness may itself pose a danger.

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in Sweden last autumn for the World Cup qualifying match, the trouble-makers were there among the rest. Yet they were allowed to start smashing windows in the city centre. The Stockholm police should be able to handle 300 trouble-makers."

Islanders decline to give Minister safety guarantees

From John Goodbody, Cagliari

COLIN Moynihan, the Minister for Sport, yesterday ran into local difficulties in his attempt to minimize possible hooliganism at the World Cup.

Although he obtained support from the Italian Government in Rome for the principle of no alcohol being sold in local bars for the 24 hours on the day that England play their three matches in the preliminary round, Moynihan flew out last night without the certainty that such an order would be carried out by the Sardinian authorities.

All he received from the meetings with Dr Mario Praxi, the deputy prefect, and Emilio Pazzi, the head of police, was an agreement that this would be considered by the Municipality.

There will have to be some strong influence from the Italian Government on the officials of Cagliari, who are noted for their independence.

E Germans to decide

KOENIGSWINTER, West Germany (AP) — East Germany may withdraw from the qualifying stages of the 1992 European championship because the two German states are moving towards unification so quickly, officials said yesterday.

East and West Germany are in the same group for the championships in Sweden, along with Wales, Belgium and Luxembourg. Qualifying

if such a ban is forthcoming.

The British Government's wish that the tournament be trouble-free depends largely on established link between excessive drinking and violent behaviour among some football supporters.

Some bar owners in the city centre have certainly feared the arrival of the violent minority of English supporters while others have a naive trust in human nature.

Recent experience has shown that any trouble is unlikely to take place during matches in the stadium which Moynihan toured last night because the games have been so heavily policed since the experience of the Heysel disaster in 1985 when 39 Juventus followers were killed after rioting by Liverpool supporters.

Any trouble is more likely to occur outside the bars in the city centres where large groups

of supporters gather for long periods before and after matches and often between fixtures.

One bar owner, Salvatore Locci, of the Nuova Olympia, admitted his concern after seeing the television film of last weekend's outburst in Bournemouth.

"I have to deal with these people face-to-face," he said. His brother, Paolo, added: "Many of these supporters are just animals and they will probably beat me up and steal the drink from behind the bar."

Despite the efforts of the FA, which has organized many of the authorized England followers into a travel club and also of the Football Supporters' Association, which is trying to provide the facilities and support for the England supporters, there is certain to be a minority of people coming to this Mediterranean island who are primarily concerned with violence.

However, in another bar facing the docks, Ignazio Lilliu said that although it was possible for the local authority to close the bar, he did not think that it would be necessary.

Roberto Pappalardo, the secretary for the Sardinian World Cup organizing committee, said that there were widespread fears in the town. "But now we have got used to it. We know that there may be a few problems but we are confident we can handle them. There will not be many troublemakers."

games start early next season. Hans-Georg Moldenhauer, president of the East German Soccer Federation, said his organization was considering pulling out from the qualifications because rapid moves to unite the German states may produce a single German team by 1992.

"We are going to watch the developments and if necessary we will discuss a withdrawal before the start of qualifications," he said.

Position of president is at risk

THE second division play-offs could lead to a change of Football League president (Louise Taylor writes). Promotion to the first division, Bill Fox, their chairman, would lose his place as a second division representative on the League management committee and would have to forfeit his role as president.

Similarly, if Newcastle United triumph in the play-offs, Gordon McKeag, their chairman, who narrowly lost to Fox in the contest for the presidency, would lose his seat as another second division representative on the management committee.

Reg Burr, the chairman of Millwall and a first division management committee representative, has already lost his League position following the relegation of his club.

Blackburn face Swindon Town in a semi-final of the play-offs, which begin on Sunday, while Newcastle United meet Sunderland.

Police and League rapport is at a high

By Louise Taylor

THE degree of co-operation between the police and the Football League became clear yesterday, when *The Times* discovered that the League had agreed to 36 of the 38 requests from the police to reschedule matches last season. The two it refused to move, Bournemouth versus Leeds and Middlesbrough versus Newcastle, proved among the most troublesome.

Under pressure from the Home Secretary, the League pledged on Tuesday that it would accede to police advice over sensitive fixtures.

Superintendent Glen Symes of Wiltshire Police explained how Swindon Town had agreed to rearrange five matches from Saturdays to Sundays last season. He said: "We asked for the matches against West Ham United, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Portsmouth, Sheffield United, and Leeds United to be switched to the Sunday because we had a history of problems involving the supporters of those clubs."

Dorset Police, rejected by the League when they sought a switch of the Bournemouth versus Leeds match last Saturday, received a more encouraging response when they wanted Bournemouth's match against West Ham moved to a Sunday in November.

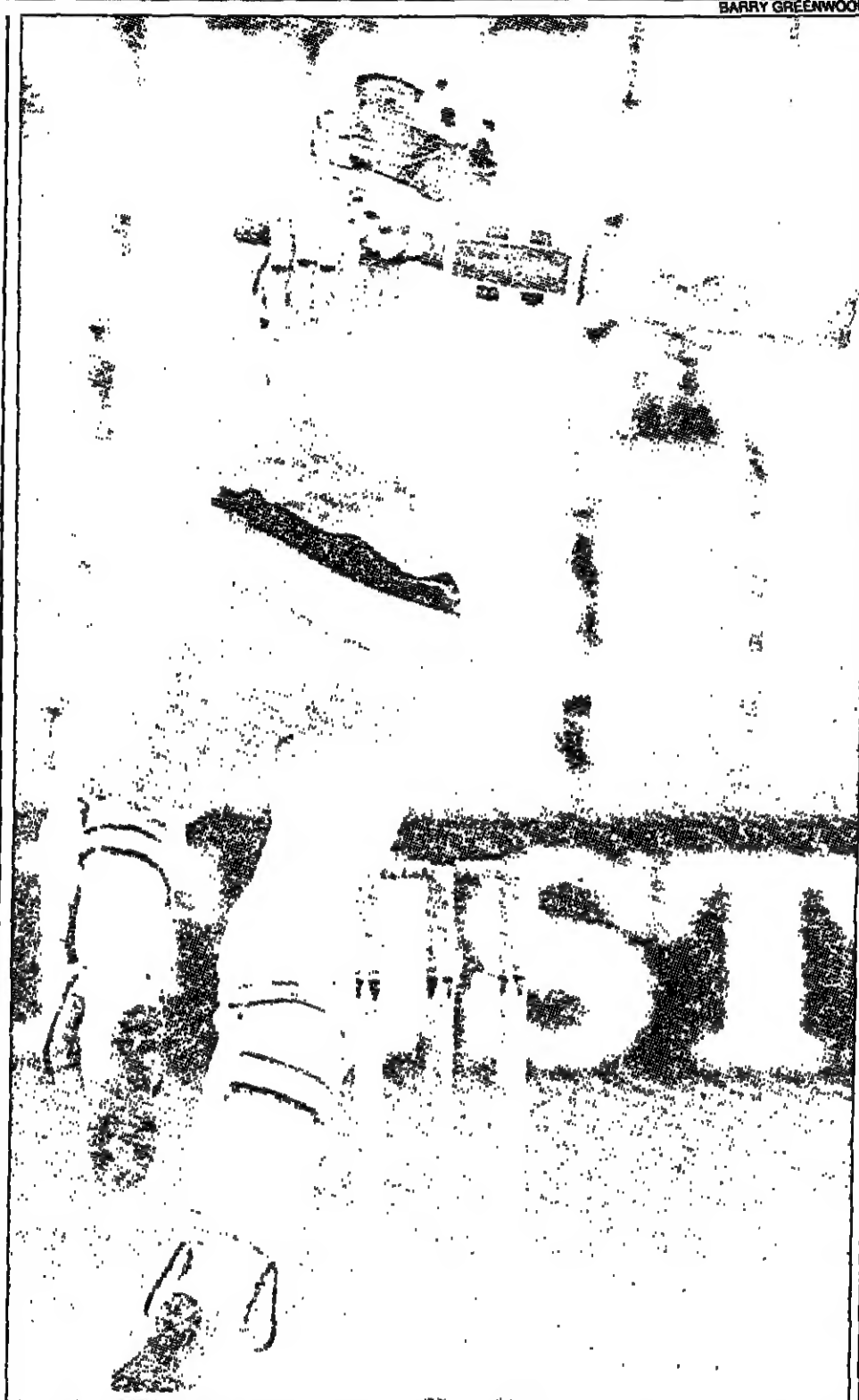
"There were no problems then that I am aware of, so I have not got a clue as to why Leeds last Saturday was a problem," Inspector Philip Coward, the police liaison officer at Bournemouth, said. There were 120 arrests, mainly of Leeds supporters, at Bournemouth.

● Chesterfield have brought forward to noon the kick-off of their fourth division promotion play-off game against Stockport in an attempt to prevent a repeat of the crowd disturbance last weekend. Police made 34 arrests after trouble at the game against Grimsby Town. Chesterfield have also made the play-off semi-final first leg an all-ticket game.

The matches in the 1989-90 season which the League switched at the request of the police:

Date	Match
Feb 23	Port Vale v Stoke
Mar 26	Stoke v Port Vale
Nov 1	Bournemouth v W Ham
Oct 13	Cardiff v Chester
Sep 15	Cardiff v Chester
Dec 16	Crewe v Bristol R
Feb 5	Crewe v Bristol R
Feb 10	Crewe v Bristol R
Jan 27	Northampton v Wigan
Jan 13	Wigan v Northampton
Feb 17	Sheff Wed v Walsley
Jan 28	Bristol R v Bolton W
Feb 18	Sheff Wed v Walsley
Mar 13	Peterborough v Lincoln
Aug 25	Crewe v Reading
Sep 2	Tranmere v Huddersfield
Sep 29	Tranmere v Huddersfield
Oct 27	Tranmere v Reading
Nov 11	Tranmere v Walsley
Nov 28	Tranmere v Walsley
Dec 1	Wigan v Birmingham
Dec 10	Wigan v Birmingham
Dec 13	Tranmere v Swindon
Dec 17	Cardiff v Stockport
Jan 5	Tranmere v Northampton
Jan 19	Tranmere v Fulham
Feb 4	Tranmere v Fulham
Feb 10	Tranmere v Birmingham
Feb 23	Tranmere v Blackpool
Mar 8	Tranmere v Wigan
Mar 16	Wigan v Bolton W
Mar 30	Tranmere v Swindon
Oct 14	Tottenham v Arsenal
Jan 13	Walsley v Sunderland

● Police in conjunction with local authority.



In full flight: Atherton hooks the ball away on his way to a century and a record-breaking partnership in a game that was later abandoned. Match report, page 46

Students humble Yorkshire

By Martin Searby

HEADINGLEY: Combined Universities (2pts) beat Yorkshire by two wickets. YORKSHIRE yesterday suffered the indignity of defeat by the Combined Universities, who are confident they can reach the quarter-finals of the Benson and Hedges Cup for the second successive year.

The universities achieved their target of 198 with seven balls to spare in an innings which owed much to the laxity of the Yorkshire fielding, which included four dropped catches. The students, in addition to holding everything in the air, ran out three men in Yorkshire's stuttering innings on the first, rain-affected, day.

James, the opening batsman, benefited from three straightforward misses and stayed to play the anchor role in a knock of a little under three hours before he was sixth out.

Mark Crawley, the captain, said: "I think if he had gone we would have been in some trouble because our batting is not as sound as our bowling,

which is tighter than last year. Van der Merwe swung the game for us but we were the better side in the field."

The second place in the group is between ourselves and Surrey and there's no reason why we should not be in the quarter-finals again if we play well."

Van der Merwe, a freshman from South Africa, weighed in with 27 from 16 deliveries. His straight hitting with a full arc of the bat accelerated the scoring at just the right time. Adkinson earlier struck crucial blows, two sixes in an over off Carrick, but he, too, was dropped at mid-on when he had scored only one.

The ball seemed so considerably that survival and calm were important in the early part of the innings. James, riding his good fortune, supplied it with steady assistance from Dale, Atkinson and Longley. By lunch 86 were required from the last 16 overs and Jarvis, in a second spell, bowled with enough pace to unsettle Longley.

James, trying to pull, was finally beaten by a delivery that did not rise as much as he anticipated after striking half a dozen good boundaries from his 137 balls. Orrell was foolishly run out and Van der Merwe went the same way.

Smith, a Yorkshireman on Gloucestershire's books, found it well worthwhile interrupting his finals in French and German at Exeter University. He struck the winning blow to inflict on Yorkshire their fifth defeat in six matches this season.

YORKSHIRE: 197 for 8 (55 overs) (R J Blakely 55, F E Robinson 57). S P James b Seddon 63, M A Crawley c Blakely b Jarvis 27, Dale c Seddon b Harty 16, C M Atkinson b Harty 14, J Longley c Blakely b Jarvis 14, T Orrell run out 14, W H van der Merwe run out 27, R J Turner not out 4, M Smith not out 12. Total 18 wickets, 50.5 overs.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-17, 2-50, 3-65, 4-85, 5-121, 6-145, 7-176, 8-195. BOWLING: Jarvis 10-0-28-0, Seddon 11-41-1, Fletcher 10-5-14-0, Harty 11-24-3, Carrick 11-0-40-0. Gold Award: W H van der Merwe. Umpires: B J Meyer and J C Balderson.

French are Britain's hurdle in Davis Cup

From Andrew Longmore
Tennis Correspondent
Rome

GIVEN the cliché much loved by football managers that a home tie against anyone is best, Britain should be happy with the draw for the Davis Cup made yesterday in London.

In most other ways, a tie against France, one of the strongest teams in the competition, seems cruel luck for Britain as they attempt to get back to the top 16 teams in the world for the first time in four years.

"It is disappointing because there were so many other teams we could have played that were equal to us in ranking," said Warren Jacques, the British team captain. "But we have to be positive, the pressure will be off us and on them. They will be expected to win."

Jacques should not be too downcast. Last time the two countries met, 12 years ago in Paris, Buster Mottram beat Yannick Noah in four sets, Mottram won 3-2 and went on to reach the final before losing to the United States.

In addition Jeremy Bates, the British No. 1 who has an excellent record in Davis Cup on grass, will not need any outside motivation against either Noah, whom he beat in Milan earlier this year, or Henri Leconte. Jacques's next task is to search out the fastest, hardest grass courts in the land for the tie which starts on September 21. Possible venues are Queen's Club, Wimbledon, or Eastbourne.

DRAW (asterisk denotes seeded country): Britain v France; Canada v Netherlands; Soviet Union v Spain; Mexico v Uruguay; Sweden v Finland; Israel v China; Yugoslavia v Switzerland; Belgium v South Korea.

Matches to be played between September 21 and 28 inclusive, with venues to be decided. The eight winners will participate in the world group in 1991 together with the eight first-round winners of the 1990 competition. The eight losers will participate in their respective zones.

Gold signs off with attack on apartheid

SIR Arthur Gold stepped down yesterday after 12 years as chairman of the Commonwealth Games Council for England. His successor as chairman is another veteran official, Norman Sarsfield, aged 69, the council's honorary treasurer.

Sir Arthur, aged 73, bowed out at the annual meeting with an attack on apartheid. He said: "I believe I speak for all British sports officials and competitors when I reiterate loudly and clearly that I utterly detest racial, religious and political discrimination in all its aspects and wherever it occurs... not merely in sport... not only in South Africa."

Start date of reduced pools duty awaited

By John Winder

JOHN Major, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is expected to make an early statement in the Commons about the date for the introduction of the reduced football pools duty, which he announced in the Budget.

Richard Ryder, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, told MPs last night that negotiations between the Football Trust, the Pools Promoters Association and the football authorities have reached an advanced stage.

Major said in the Budget that he would cut the duty by 2.5 per cent, provided that the balance went to football trusts to improve the safety and comfort at football grounds.

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Americans airlifted in for their ooh-la-la

From Patricia Davies
Paris

LOOKS are everything as far as the French are concerned. *Le style* is paramount and, as a result, the Hennessy Women's Cup, which starts at Saint Germain today, features two Americans whose golf was of secondary importance when it came to issuing their invitations.

Deborah McHaffie and Tammie Green were picked, from photographs, because they looked good.

Lionel Provost, the promoter of the event, which is one of the best on the women's

tour and worth £13,500 to the winner, was candid. "They were chosen for their looks above all else," he said. "We need women who look good. We have learned, over the years, that the aesthetic element is important for good coverage."

Perhaps all that sounds less sexist in French. Apparently, some of the magazines complained that the women were not photogenic enough.

But there should be no complaints this year. McHaffie and Green have both been featured in glamorous poses in *Fairway*, the

American tour's annual magazine, and are also pleasant, gracious personalities.

Green has also won a tournament, the du Maurier Classic, one of the women's major championships, and said she was "flattered" at the idea of being asked for her looks. According to a man who knows about these things, she has the best legs on the US women's tour.

McHaffie, a long, leggy blonde from Las Vegas, has been playing golf for only seven years and was 49th on the money-list last year. But she has drawn crowds who

were simply curious to see what she was wearing.

Coming from Vegas, however, she does not know the meaning of sartorial restraint and, we are informed, once featured in a list of the worst dressed golfers under the heading "typhoon of fat".

Yesterday, she was fairly restrained in matching white blouse and shorts covered with black zig-zags to match her zebra headcovers.

Jane Blalock, the American professional who had a row with Jan Stephenson a few years ago, when the Australian

was pictured in a variety of sexy poses for a calendar, would certainly not approve. But no one here seemed to mind.

Allison Nicholas, one of the British competitors in the tournament, said: "They're both very nice girls and, if it attracts people, that's great."

"I've always been short and dumpy so I don't think I've ever been invited to any tournament for my looks."

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